FIGHTING FOR THE KING AND THE GODS

A Survey of Warfare in the Ancient Near East

Charlie Trimm

FIGHTING FOR THE KING
AND THE GODS

RESOURCES FOR BIBLICAL STUDY

Editor
Marvin A. Sweeney, Old Testament/Hebrew Bible

Number 88

SBL PRESS

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SBL PRESS
Atlanta

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Trimm, Charlie, 1977– author.
Title: Fighting for the king and the gods : a survey of warfare in the ancient Near East / by Charlie Trimm.
Description: Atlanta : SBL Press, 2017. | Series: Resources for biblical study ; number 88 | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2017021412 (print) | LCCN 2017026895 (ebook) | ISBN 9780884142379 (ebook) | ISBN 9781628371840 (pbk. : alk. paper) | ISBN 9780884142386 (hardcover : alk. paper)
Subjects: LCSH: Military art and science—History—To 500. | Military art and science—Middle East—History. | Iraq—History—To 634.
Classification: LCC U31 (ebook) | LCC U31 .T75 2017 (print) | DDC 355.0209394—dc23
LC record available at hhps://lccn.loc.gov/2017021412

Printed on acid-free paper.

In memory of my father

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Abbreviations and Sigla

[ ]	Single brackets enclose restorations.
⸢ ⸣	Raised brackets indicate partial restorations.
[…]	Single brackets and ellipis indicate missing and unrestorable text.
A	tablets in the collections at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago
AAASH	*Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*
AANEA	Archaeopress Ancient Near Eastern Archaeology
AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
ÄAT	Ägypten und Altes Testament
AB	Anchor Bible
AbB	*Altbabylonische Briefe in Umschrift und Übersetzung*. Leiden: Brill, 1964–.
ABL	Harper, Robert Francis, ed. *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters Belonging to the Kouyunjik Collections of the British Museum*. 14 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1892–1914.
ABoT	Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri
ABS	Archaeology and Biblical Studies
AEL	Lichtheim, Miriam, ed. *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*. 3 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973–1980.
AeL	*Aegypten und Levante/Egypt and the Levant*
AfO	*Archiv für Orientforschung*
AfOB	Archiv für Orientforschung Beiheft
AHR	*American Historical Review*
AhT	Ahhiyawa Text

AIL	Ancient Israel and Its Literature
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
ALASP	Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt-Syrien-Palästinas und Mesopotamiens
Anab.	Xenophon, *Anabasis*
ANEHST	Chavalas, Mark W., ed. *The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation*. BSAH. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006.
ANEM	Ancient Near East Monographs
ANEMS	Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean Studies
ANEP	*The Ancient Near East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament*. Edited by James B. Pritchard. 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
ANES	*Ancient Near Eastern Studies*
ANESSup	Ancient Near Eastern Studies Supplement
ANET	Pritchard, James B., ed. *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. 3rd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.
AnOr	Analecta Orientalia
AnSt	*Anatolian Studies*
AO	Collection of Antiquités Orientales of the Musée du Louvre, Paris
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
AOAT 43	Heeßel, Nils P. *Babylonisch-assyrische Diagnostik*. AOAT 43. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2000.
AoF	*Altorientalische Forschungen*
AOS	American Oriental Series
ARE	Breasted, James Henry. *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents*. 5 vols. New York: Russell & Russell, 1906–1907. Repr. New York: Russell & Russell, 1962.
ARM	Archives Royales de Mari
AS	Assyriological Studies
ASAESup	Supplément aux annales du service des Antiquités de L'Égypte
ASJ	*Acta Sumerologica*
AuOrSup	Aula Orientalis Supplementa

AUSTR	American University Studies, Series 7: Theology and Religion
AVO	Altertumskunde des Vorderen Orients
AWCH	Ancient World: Comparative Histories
BabAr	Babylonische Archive
BaF	Baghdader Forschungen
BAL	Blackwell Ancient Lives
BaM	*Baghdader Mitteilungen*
BAR	*Biblical Archaeology Review*
BARIS	British Archaeological Reports International Series
BBRSup	Bulletin for Biblical Research, Supplements
BCAW	Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World
BCT 2	Watson, P. J., and W. B. Horowitz. *Neo-Sumerian Texts from Umma and Other Sites*. Vol. 2 of *Catalogue of Cuneiform Tablets in Birmingham City Museum*. Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1993.
BDS	BIBAL Dissertation Series
BEL	Biblical Encyclopedia Library
BEStud	Brown Egyptological Studies
BHAW	Blackwell History of the Ancient World
BIAAOP	Occasional Publications of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara
Bib	*Biblica*
BibOr	Biblica et orientalia
BISNELC	Bar-Ilan Studies in Near Eastern Languages and Culture
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BJSUCSD	Biblical and Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego
BK	*Bibel und Kirche*
BM	tablets in the collections of the British Museum
BM	*Beit Mikra: Journal for the Study of the Bible and Its World*
BMes	Bibliotheca Mesopotamica
BN	*Biblische Notizen*
BO	*Bibliotheca Orientalis*
BRS	Biblical Resource Series
BSAH	Blackwell Sourcebooks in Ancient History
BSEG	*Bulletin de la Société d’Égyptologie Genève*

BT	*The Bible Translator*
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CANE	Sasson, Jack M, ed. *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*. 4 vols. New York: 1995. Repr. in 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006.
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CBR	*Currents in Biblical Research*
CBS	Catalogue of the Babylonian Section, University Museum University of Pennsylvania
CCS	Cambridge Classical Studies
CDOG	Colloquien der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft
CHANE	Culture and History of the Ancient Near East
CHLI	Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions
chron.	chronicle
CHSC	Center for Hellenic Studies Colloquia
CII	Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum
CIRPL	Sollberger, Edmond, ed. *Corpus des inscriptions royales présargoniques de Lagash*. Geneva: Droz, 1956.
CJ	*Classical Journal*
CM	Cuneiform Monographs
CMAO	*Contributi e Materiali di Archeologia Orientale*
col(s).	column(s)
ConBOT	Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series
COS	Hallo, William W., and K. Lawson Younger Jr., eds. *The Context of Scripture*. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997–2016.
CP	*Classical Philology*
CTH	Laroche, Emmanuel. *Catalogue des textes hittites*. Paris: Klincksieck, 1971.
CT	Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum
CTN	Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud
CUSAS	Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology
Cyr.	Xenophon, *Cyropaedia*
DB	Inscription of Darius at Bisitun (with possible additions a–k)

DCLY	*Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Yearbook*
DPd	Darius I Persepolis terrace inscription
DMA	Documenta Mundi Aegyptiaca
DNa	Darius I Naqsh-I Rustam inscription a
DoArch	*Les Dossiers D'archéologie*
DPS	Diagnostic-Prognostic Series
DSe	Darius I Susa inscription e
EA	El-Amarna letter
EAH	Entretiens d'archéologie et d'histoire
EarlySciMed	*Early Science and Medicine*
EESOP	Egypt Exploration Society Occasional Publications
ErIsr	*Eretz Israel*
ETCSL	The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature. http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394b.
ExpTim	*Expository Times*
f.	feminine
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
FHL	Durand, J.-M., and E. Laroche. *Fragments hittites du Louvre*. Paris: Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1982.
FM	Texts published in *Florilegium marianum*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
FuB	*Forschungen und Berichte*
GDBS	Gorgias Dissertations, Biblical Studies
GDNE	Gorgias Dissertations: Near Eastern Studies
GMTR	Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Record
GUS	Gorgias Ugaritic Studies
HÄB	Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge
HACL	History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant
HANE/M	History of the Ancient Near East/Monographs
HANE/S	History of the Ancient Near East/Studies
HBAI	*Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel*
HdO	Handbuch der Orientalistik
HEO	Hautes études orientales
HiMA	*Revue Internationale d'Histoire Militaire Ancienne*
Hist.	Herodotus, *Historiae*
HistFilosSkr	Historisk-filosofiske skrifter/Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab

HKM	Maşat cuneiform tablets in Sedat Alp, *Hethitische Keilschrifttafeln aus Maşat-Höyük*. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1991.
HSAO	Heidelberger Studien zum Alten Orient
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
HSS V	Chiera, Edward. *Texts of Varied Contents: Selected and Copied by Edward Chiera*. HSS 5. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929.
HSS XIV	Lacheman, Ernest R. *The Palace and Temple Archives*. Part 2 of *Miscellaneous Texts from Nuzi.* Vol. 5 of *Excavations at Nuzi*. HSS 14. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950.
HSS XV	Lacheman, Ernest R. T*he Administrative Archives: Selected and Copied by Ernest R. Lacheman*. Vol. 6 of *Excavations at Nuzi*. HSS 15. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955.
HW	History of Warfare
IBMH	*International Bibliography of Military History*
IEJ	*Israel Exploration Journal*
IOS	Israel Oriental Studies
IrAnt	*Iranica Antiqua*
ISBL	Indiana Studies in Biblical Literature
ITT	Inventaire des Tablettes de Tello conservées au Musée Impérial Ottoman
JAAS	*Journal of Assyrian Academic Studies*
JACiv	*Journal of Ancient Civilizations*
JANEH	*Journal of Ancient Near Eastern History*
JANER	*Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions*
JANESCU	*Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JARCE	*Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JCS	*Journal of Cuneiform Studies*
JCSSup	Journal of Cuneiform Studies Supplement Series
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*
JEN	Joint Expedition with the Iraq Museum at Nuzi

JESHO	*Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*
JKF	*Jahrbuch für kleinasiatische Forschung*
JMH	*Journal of Military History*
JNES	*Journal of Near Eastern Studies*
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JSSEA	*Toronto Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities Journal/Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities*
KAI	Donner, Herbert, and Wolfgang Röllig. *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*. 2nd ed. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966–1969.
KAJ	Ebeling, Erich. *Keilschrifttexte aus Assur juristischen Inhalts*. WVDOG 50. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1927.
KBo	*Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi*. Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1916–1923; Berlin: Mann, 1954.
km	kilometer(s)
KTU	Dietrich, Manfried, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín, eds. *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013. 3rd enl. ed. of *KTU: The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places*. Edited by Manfried Dietrich, Oswald Loretz, and Joaquín Sanmartín. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995.
KUB	*Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazkö*i. Berlin: Akademie, 1921–.
LAOS	Leipziger Altorientalistische Studien
LAPO	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient
LAS	Parpola, Simo. *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*. 2 vols. AOAT 5. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970–1983.
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LHP	Life, health, prosperity, placed after mention of Pharaoh
LingAegSM	Lingua Aegyptia Studia Monographica

MARV 4	Freydank, H., and C. Fischer. *Tafeln aus Kār-Tukultī-Ninurta*. Vol. 4 of *Mittelassyrische Rechtsurkunden und Verwaltungstexte*. Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft in Assur. E, Inschriften 7. Keilschrifttexte aus mittelassyrischer Zeit 2. WVDOG 99. Berlin: Saarbrücker, 2001.
MÄS	Münchner Ägyptologische Studien
MC	Mesopotamian Civilizations
MDAI	*Mitteilungen des Deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo*
MDP	Mémoires de la Délégation en Perse
Mesopotamia	Mesopotamia Copenhagen Studies in Assyriology
mi.	mile(s)
NABU	*Nouvelles assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires*
ND	field numbers of tablets excavated at Nimrud (Kalḫu)
NEAEHL	Stern, Ephraim, ed. *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*. 5 vols. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1993–2008.
NIN	*NIN: Journal of Gender Studies in Antiquity*
OAC	Orientis Antiqvi Collectio
OBTR	Lau, Robert J. *Old Babylonian Temple Records*. Columbia University Oriental Studies. New York: Columbia University Press, 1906.
OEAE	Redford, Donald B. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*. 3 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
OIC	Oriental Institute Communications
OIP	Oriental Institute Publications
OIS	Oriental Institute Seminars
OJA	*Oxford Journal of Archaeology*
OLA	Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta
OLZ	*Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*
Or	*Orientalia* NS
ORA	Orientalische Religionen in der Antike
Or.Dr.	British Museum original drawings collection
OrSP	Orientalia Series Prior
OSCC	Oklahoma Series in Classical Culture
OTS	Old Testament Studies

P.Anast. 1	Papyrus Anastasi 1. In H.-W. Fischer-Elfert. *Die Satirische Streitschrift des Papyrus Anastasi I*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1986.
P.Anast. 2–6	Papyrus Anastasi 2–6. Pages 12–78 in *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*. Edited by Alan Henderson Gardiner. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
P.Beatty 4	Kenyon, F. G., ed. *Genesis*. Vol. 4 of *Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*. London: Walker, 1935–1936.
P.Beatty 5	Kenyon, F. G., ed. *Numbers and Deuteronomy*. Vol. 5 of *Chester Beatty Biblical Papyri*. London: Walker, 1935.
P.Bologna 1094	Papyrus Bologna 1094. Pages 1–12 in *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*. Edited by Alan Henderson Gardiner. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
P.BM 10752	Papyrus Ramesseum C. Pages 8, 11 in *The Ramesseum Papyri* . Edited by Alan Henderson Gardiner. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1955.
P.BM EA 10274	Parkinson, R. B. “The Discourse of the Fowler; Papyrus Butler verso (P BM EA 10274).” *JEA* 90 (2004): 81–112.
P.Cairo	Golénischchev, V. *Papyrus Hiératiques*. CGC 83. Cairo: n.p., 1927.
P.Harr.	Powell, J. E., et al., eds. *The Rendel Harris Papyri of Woodbrooke College, Birmingham*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936; Zutphen: Terra, 1985.
P.Koller	Papyrus Koller. Pages 116–20 in *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*. Edited by Alan Henderson Gardiner. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
P.Lansing	Papyrus Lansing. Ages 100–16 in *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*. Edited by Alan Henderson Gardiner. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
P.Leiden 1.350	Zandee, J. “De Hymnen aan Amon van Papyrus Leiden I 350.” *OMRO* 28 (1947): pls. 1–30.
P.Sallier 1	Sallier Papyri. Pages 79–88 in *Late Egyptian Miscellanies*. Edited by Alan Henderson Gardiner. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
P.Turin B	Turin B Papyrus. Pages 465–75 in Ricardo A. Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*. Brown Egyp-

	tological Studies 1. London: Oxford University Press, 1954.
P.Wilbour	Papyrus Wilbour. Brooklyn Musuem 34.5596.4. Gardiner, Alan H. *The Wilbour Papyrus*. 4 vols. Oxford University Press, 1948.
PAAH	Publications of the Association of Ancient Historians
PAe	Probleme der Ägyptologie
PEQ	*Palestine Exploration Quarterly*
PIHANS	Publications de l'Institut historique-archéologique néerlandais de Stamboul
pl(s).	plate(s)
PMAULS	Publications de la Massion archéologique de l'Université de Liège en Syrie
PMMA	Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art Egyptian Expedition
P-S	Pfeiffer, Robert H., and Ephraim A. Speiser. *One Hundred New Selected Nuzi Texts*. AASOR 16. New Haven: American Schools of Oriental Research, 1936.
PTSD	Posttraumic Stress Disorder
QGS	Quaderni di Geografia Storica
RA	*Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale*
RAI	Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale
RC	*Religion Compass*
RES	*Répertoire d'Épigraphie Sémitique*
RGRW	Religions in the Graeco-Roman World
RHAW	Routledge History of the Ancient World
RIH	Ras Ibn Hani Ugaritic tablet
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RIMA 1	Grayson, A. Kirk. *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia BC (to 1115 BC)*. RIMA 1. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987.
RIMA 2	Grayson, A. Kirk. *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC I (1114–859 BC)*. RIMA 2. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.

RIMA 3	Grayson, A. Kirk. *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC II (858–745 BC)*. RIMA 3. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996.
RIMB	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Babylonian Periods
RIMB 2	Frame, Grant. *Rulers of Babylonia From the Second Dynasty of Isin to the End of Assyrian Domination (1157–612 BC)*. RIMB 2. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.
RIME	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods
RIME 1	Frayne, Douglas. *Presargonic Period (2700–2350 BC)*. RIME 1. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.
RIME 2	Frayne, Douglas. *Sargonic and Gutian Periods (2334–2113 BC)*. RIME 2. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.
RIME 3.1	Edzard, Dietz Otto. *Gudea and His Dynasty*. RIME 3.1. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
RIME 3.2	Frayne, Douglas. *Ur III Period (2112–2004 BC)*. RIME 3.2. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997.
RIME 4	Frayne, Douglas. *Old Babylonian Period (2003–1595 BC)*. RIME 4. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia of the Neo-Assyrian Period
RINAP 1	Tadmor, Hayim, and Shigeo Yamada. *The Royal Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III (744–727 BC) and Shalmaneser V (726–722 BC), Kings of Assyria*. RINAP 1. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
RINAP 3.1	Grayson, A. Kirk, and Jamie Novotny. *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BC)*. Part 1. RINAP 3.1. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012.
RINAP 3.2	Grayson, A. Kirk, and Jamie Novotny. *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BC)*. Part 2. RINAP 3.2. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014.

RINAP 4	Leichty, Erle. *The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)*. RINAP 4. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011.
RITA	Kitchen, K. A. *Ramesside Inscriptions Translated and Annotated: Translations*. 7 vols. Oxford: Blackwell; Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 1993–2014.
RS	Ras Shamra Ugaritic Tablet
RSL	Ras Shamra Letter
s.	singular
SAAB	*State Archives of Assyria Bulletin*
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
SAA 1	Parpola, Simo. *Letters from Assyria and the West*. Part 1 of *The Correspondence of Sargon II*. SAA 1. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1987.
SAA 2	Parpola, Simo, and Kazuko Watanabe. *Neo-Assyrian Treaties and Loyalty Oaths*. SAA 2. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1988.
SAA 3	Livingstone, Alasdair. *Court Poetry and Literary Miscellanea*. SAA 3. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1989.
SAA 4	Starr, Ivan. *Queries to the Sungod: Divination and Politics in Sargonid Assyria*. SAA 4. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1990.
SAA 5	Lanfranchi, Giovanni B., and Simo Parpola. *Letters from the Northern and Northeastern Provinces*. Part 2 of *The Correspondence of Sargon II*. SAA 5. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1990.
SAA 6	Kwasman, Theodore, and Simo Parpola. *Tiglath-Pileser III through Esarhaddon*. Part 1 of *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh*. SAA 6. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1991.
SAA 7	Fales, Frederick Mario, and J. N. Postgate. *Palace and Temple Administration*. Part 1 of *Imperial Administrative Records*. SAA 7. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1992.
SAA 8	Hunger, Hermann. *Astrological Reports to Assyrian Kings*. SAA 8. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1992.

SAA 9	Parpola, Simo. *Assyrian Prophecies*. SAA 9. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1997.
SAA 10	Parpola, Simo. *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*. SAA 10. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1993.
SAA 11	Fales. Frederick Mario. and J. N. Postgate. *Provincial and Military Administration*. Part 2 of *Imperial Administrative Records*. SAA 11. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1995.
SAA 12	Kataja, Laura, and Robert Whiting. *Grants, Decrees, and Gifts of the Neo-Assyrian Period*. SAA 12. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1995.
SAA 13	Cole, Steven W., and Peter Machinist. *Letters from Priests to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*. SAA 13. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1998.
SAA 14	Mattila, Raija. *Ashurbanipal through Sin-Šarru-Iškun*. Part 2 of *Legal Transactions of the Royal Court of Nineveh*. SAA 14. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 2002.
SAA 15	Fuchs, Andreas, and Simo Parpola. *Letters from Babylonia and the Eastern Provinces*. Part 3 of *The Correspondence of Sargon II*. SAA 15. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 2001.
SAA 16	Luukko, Mikko, and Greta Van Buylaere. *The Political Correspondence of Esarhaddon*. SAA 16. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 2002.
SAA 17	Dietrich, Manfried. *The Babylonian Correspondence of Sargon and Sennacherib*. SAA 17. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.
SAA 18	Reynolds, Frances. *The Babylonian Correspondence of Esarhaddon: And Letters to Assurbanipal and Sin-šarru-iškun from Northern and Central Babylonia*. SAA 18. Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 2003.
SAA 19	Luukko, Mikko. *The Correspondence of Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II from Calah/Nimrud*. SAA 19. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2012
SAACT	State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts
SAAS	State Archives of Assyria Studies

SAGA	Studien zur Archäologie und Geschichte Altägyptens
SAHL	Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant
SAMD	Studies in Ancient Magic and Divination
SANER	Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records
SAOC	Studies in Ancient Oriental civilization
Sasson	Sasson, Jack M. *From the Mari Archives: An Anthology of Old Babylonian Letters*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2017.
SAT	Sumerian Archival Texts
SBLMS	Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series
SHAR	Studies in the History and Anthropology of Religion
SLA	Pfeiffer, Robert H. *State Letters of Assyria: A Transliteration and Translation of 355 Official Letters Dating from the Sargonid Period (722–625 B.C.)*. AOS 6. New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1935.
SMA	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
SMEA	*Studi micenei ed egeo-anatolici*
SSI	Gibson, John C. L. *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*. 3 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1971–1982.
StBoT	Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten
StMed	Studia Mediterranea
StOr	*Studia Orientalia*
StPohl	Studia Pohl
StPohlSM	Studia Pohl Series Maior
SymS	Symposium Series
TA	*Tel Aviv*
THeth	Texte der Hethiter
TLC	Kitchen, Kenneth A., and Paul J. N. Lawrence. *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East*. 3 vols. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012.
UCP	University of California Publications in Semitic Philology
UET	Ur Excavations Texts
UF	*Ugarit-Forschungen*
var.	variant

VAT	Tablets at the Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WA	*World Archaeology*
WAW	Writings from the Ancient World
WO	*Die Welt des Orients*
WZKM	*Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes*
XPh	Xerxes Persepolis "Daiva" inscription
YBC	tablet from the Yale Babylonian Collection
YES	Yale Egyptological Studies
YNER	Yale Near Eastern Researches
YOS	Yale Oriental Series, Texts
ZABR	*Zeitschrift für altorientalische und biblische Rechgeschichte*
ZÄS	*Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde*

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1

Introduction

> War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* 1.1

As throughout most of the world, warfare was common throughout the ancient Near East.[1] Most people would have seen warfare firsthand at some point in their life and virtually all major aspects of life in the ancient Near East were affected in some way by violent conflict. Since the study of warfare is essential to understanding many areas of life, a never-ending stream of work has addressed the topic. However, due to the linguistic diversity, geographical spread, and long time frame of the ancient Near East, these studies on warfare tend to be limited to specific cultures, time periods, or topics.[2] In addition, much of the specialized work on warfare has been known only to scholars in that particular field. Although sourcebooks have been published on warfare in later periods (such as warfare among the Greeks and Romans), fewer scholars have compiled the material in the ancient Near East.[3] Yigael Yadin's *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands* is the best in the genre for the ancient Near East, but it is now over fifty years old (1963), making it difficult for readers to track down sources, and it organizes the data in terms of the Old Testament.[4]

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[1] For two scholars' opinion of the eighty major battles of the period, see Nigel Stillman and Nigel Tallis, *Armies of the Ancient Near East: 3,000 BC to 539 BC; Organisation, Tactics, Dress and Equipment* (Cambridge: Wargames Research Group, 1984), 69–90.

[2] Cultures: Jack M. Sasson, *The Military Establishment at Mari*, StPohl 3 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1969); Richard H. Beal, *The Organization of the Hittite Military*, THeth 20 (Heidelberg: Winter, 1992); Anthony J. Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt: The New Kingdom*, Ancient World at War (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005). Time periods: William J. Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC: Holy Warriors at the Dawn of History*, Warfare and History (London: Routledge, 2006). Topics: Robert Drews, *Early Riders: The Beginnings of Mounted Warfare in Asia and Europe* (New York: Routledge, 2004); Israel Eph'al, *The City Besieged: Siege and Its Manifestations in the Ancient Near East*, CHANE 36 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

This book seeks to fill that void by gathering and summarizing a wide variety of texts and images concerning many aspects of warfare in the ancient Near East to provide an introduction to the topic. (In personal terms, this is the book I wish existed when I was writing my dissertation!) The information gathered here (from the earliest texts of the ancient Near East to the early Persian period) illustrates various viewpoints on war and shows how warfare was an integral part of life. We will pay attention not only to the victors and the famous battles, but also to the suffering that war brought to innumerable nameless victims, as well as the many more mundane aspects of warfare. Although several of these texts are well known (such as Ramesses II's battle against the Hittites at Qadesh), many of them are less well known (especially the more "realistic" texts about warfare like letters). One of the main goals of the book is to make it easier for readers to track down both these sources. References to representative secondary literature in each specific aspect of warfare are also included to allow for further study. Preference will be given to English translations of texts and secondary sources, but a selection of secondary sources in other languages will also be cited throughout the work to help those seeking to do further research.

Although the focus is on texts, we will also address visual images (and include representative examples of these images throughout the book). Many of these images, especially those from the British Museum and the Louvre, are freely available for viewing online. In general, an Internet search for the image with the name of the museum and its museum number leads to a picture of the relief. For example, searching for "British Museum 118904" yields a picture of a relief from Tiglath-pileser III depicting Assyrian archers attacking an enemy city (see the top right corner of fig. 1.1[5]). Many drawings from the 1800s of now-lost reliefs are also found on the British Museum website, referred to as the Original Drawings volumes. They are abbreviated in the form Or.Dr.IV.78 (a drawing of a relief of Sennacherib showing his troops in boats), which is picture 78 from vol. 4. When relevant, we will also cite a few archaeological sources throughout the book, especially when it comes to fortifications, weapons, and armor.

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[3] William K. Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, 5 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971); Brian Campbell, *The Roman Army, 31 BC–AD 337: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1994); Michael Sage, *Warfare in Ancient Greece: A Sourcebook* (London: Routledge, 1996); Adrian Goldsworthy, *The Roman Army at War: 100 BC–AD 200*, OCM (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

[4] Yigael Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands: In the Light of Archaeological Study*, trans. M. Pearlman, 2 vols. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963).

This book is intended for a variety of audiences. Ancient Near Eastern scholars will benefit from the book, as it provides a collection of warfare texts from a variety of cultures as well as recent research in the field. Biblical scholars will find it helpful as a reference for comparing biblical texts about warfare with a broader ancient Near Eastern background. Finally, military historians and others interested in warfare in general will find this book an easy pathway to investigating ancient warfare. Most works on ancient military history spend little time in the ancient Near East, and a survey of the various aspects of warfare for the era will go some distance to alleviating the problem of finding sources and alerting these scholars to the importance of the time period for their research.[6]

1.1. Old and New Military History

Before looking at warfare in the ancient Near East specifically, it will be helpful to survey briefly the state of the field of military history. The academic field of military history began in the nineteenth century as a way to systematize the study of warfare and fight battles more effectively.[7] Now called old military history, it tended to focus on the tactics and strategies of battles and campaigns, the generals leading the troops, and the weapons and armor employed in warfare. Many books on warfare in the ancient

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[5] A detailed photograph of BM 118904 may be found at §7.2.4, of BM 118882 at §6.3.4, and of BM 118902 at §4.5.4.

[6] For more on the Eurocentric focus of many military historians, see Jeremy Black, *Rethinking Military History* (London: Routledge, 2004), 66–103.

[7] For various studies of the history and current state of military history, see John Whiteclay Chambers II, “The New Military History: Myth and Reality,” *JMH* 55 (1991): 395–406; Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 26–63; Robert M. Citino, “Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction,” *AHR* 112 (2007): 1070–90; Lee L. Brice and Jennifer T. Robert, “Introduction,” in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, ed. Lee L. Brice and Jennifer T. Roberts, PAAH 10 (Claremont: Regina, 2011), 1–10.

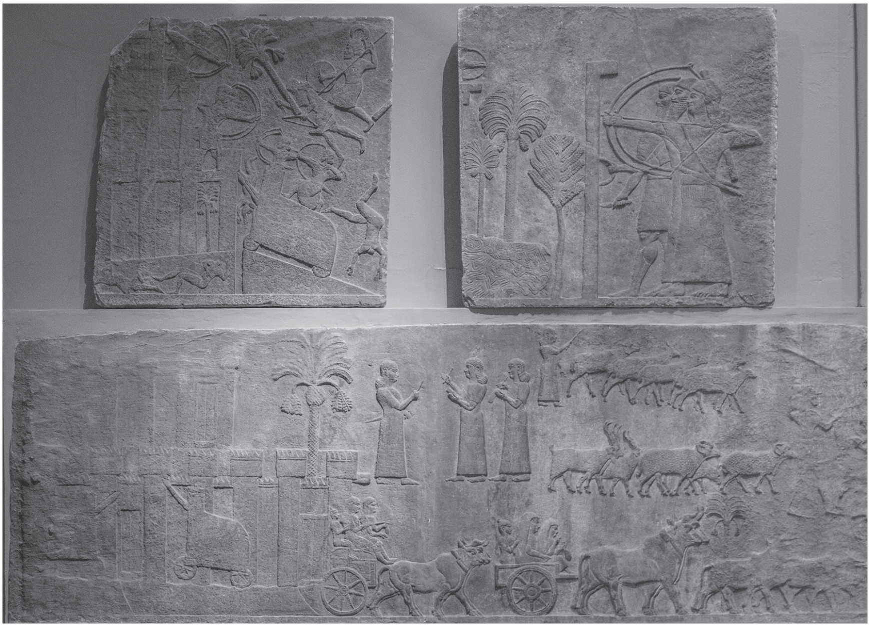

Fig. 1.1. Assyrian reliefs from Tiglath-pileser III; BM 118904 (top right), BM 118882 (bottom), and BM 118902 (top left). Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

Near East continue this focus, especially those written at a popular level.[8] This book will be covering much of this ground, especially in the chapters on battles and weapons and armor.

In the twentieth century the field of military history has developed a negative reputation in scholarly circles, and both the number of military history faculty positions and the field's range of influence among academics have declined. The reasons for this include the backlash against warfare as a result of the Vietnam War, the immense popularity of the topic at the popular level (and the substandard value of much of the material produced for that audience), and the restricted focus of old military history. Military historians have been actively fighting this trend, as demonstrated by the recent publication of a "White Paper" by the Society for Military

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[8] Stillman and Tallis, *Armies of the Ancient Near East*; Nic Fields, *Bronze Age War Chariots*, New Vanguard 119 (Oxford: Osprey, 2006); Trevor Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, Warrior 120 (Oxford: Osprey, 2007).

History, which argued for the necessity of military history as part of the broader field of history.[9]

Military history has expanded in recent decades by paying greater attention to the common soldiers in warfare (rather than focusing solely on the "great men" in charge of armies), as exemplified most famously by John Keegan's *The Face of Battle*.[10] This book will address that question (especially in the chapter on officers and soldiers), though unfortunately the data available for study in this area in the ancient Near East is minimal.

One major argument for the continued relevance of military history has been the expansion of its focus to what is often called new military history, which studies how warfare relates to other areas (such as the connection between warfare and society). Jeremy Black summarizes new military history in the following way.

> War and society pursues the relationship between war and social class, gender, etc. at one level and at another asks how far war mirrors society: in what way the military and the exercise of military might reflect social constructs and images. There is now an extensive literature on such varied subjects as conscription, memorializing war, the appearance of the military, not least the purpose of uniform, the military and health, the environmental consequences of war, the gender aspects of military history, and war as a form of disciplining bodies and applying violence to the body.[11]

Scholars looking at the ancient Near East have many books that fit within this genre.[12] This book will look at many of these aspects, especially in the chapters on preparation for war, the results of war, and officers and soldiers. While much more could be said about war and society, it is to be hoped that the portions covered in this book will allow others to develop them in more depth. The popularity of new military history among military historians is now such that one scholar says this about it, "Once controversial, and still the occasional subject of grumbling from a traditionalist old guard, the new military history is today an integral, even dominant, part of the parent field from which it emerged. It has been around so long, in fact, and has established itself so firmly, that it seems silly to keep calling it 'new.'"[13]

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[9] Tami Davis Biddle and Robert M. Citino, "The Role of Military History in the Contemporary Academy: A Society for Military History White Paper," 2014, http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394a.

[10] John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Viking, 1976); for more on this trend in research and publication, see Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 35–37.

[11] Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 50.

[12] E.g., Andrea M. Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft: Ein Beitrag zur Socialgeschichte des Neuen Reiches*, SAGA 17 (Heidelberg: Heidelberg Orientverlag, 1996); Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*.

Finally, military history has expanded by discussing to a greater extent the role of memory and warfare. Popular culture often provides us with views of wars and battles that do not reflect how contemporaries of the wars viewed them. How wars are remembered often create controversy, such as the acrimonious discussion in Germany about the role of the German army in the Holocaust or the dispute about displaying the *Enola Gay* (the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima) in the Smithsonian Institute. This branch of military history has many parallels in scholarly circles, such as the recent focus on reception history in biblical studies. This new focus of military history could reap great dividends in the ancient Near East, where memory of past battles played such an important role.

1.2. Historicity

Before beginning a study of warfare in the ancient Near East, it is important to express a cautionary word about the historicity of many of the sources of our information. Concerns about the accuracy of sources are not restricted to ancient times, but are present in modern times as well. Black cites a modern officer who says, "I am apt to turn a rather jaundiced eye on strength returns—perhaps because of vague memories of conjuring rabbits out of hats, as an adjutant a long time ago!"[14]

The most famous source of information about warfare from the ancient Near East comes from the royal annals, which clearly reflect the perspective of the king.[15] Designed to glorify the king, these texts always magnify the victories of the king and his superiority over the enemy. Although the annals exhibit broad similarities between cultures, each nation wrote their annals in distinctive styles. Even within the same culture, various ways of writing military accounts are attested; for example, the Egyptians wrote several different kinds of military accounts, depending on such factors as whether the pharaoh was present in the battle.[16] As will be discussed below, it appears that scribes accompanied the army on at least some campaigns for the major powers and wrote war diaries recording the events of the campaign. Due to the propagandistic nature of the annals and reliefs, caution must be exercised in depending upon these accounts for gaining historical knowledge. However, it appears that as much as they might stretch the truth, they did not often invent events wholesale.[17]

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[13] Citino, "Military Histories Old and New," 1071.

[14] Letter from C. J. C. Molony to Liddell Hart, October 7, 1958; quoted in Black, *Rethinking Military History*, 31; Black also presents many other similar examples there about the difficulty of trusting sources in modern times.

[15] For an entry point into the genre of the annals in the ancient Near East (and especially the Assyrian annals), see A. Kirk Grayson, "Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: Literary Characteristics," in *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: New Horizons in Literary, Ideological, and Historical Analysis: Papers of a Symposium Held in Cetona (Siena) June 26–28, 1980*, ed. F. M. Fales, OAC 17 (Rome: Istituto Per L'Oriente, 1981), 35–48; Hayim Tadmor, "History and Ideology in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in Fales,

Alongside royal annals, the other major source of information about warfare in the ancient Near East comes from administrative documents, especially letters. Since these letters reflect more of the everyday practice of warfare, they are most likely closer to the reality of the situation and can be trusted to bring us closer to the reality of the situation. However, even letters were biased in particular directions; a letter to the king of Ur might have exaggerated the size of an army to sway the king.[18]

One of the most obvious examples of biased tests is the scribal texts from Egypt in the Ramesside Period (Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties in the New Kingdom) that were designed to persuade the reader that the

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Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, 13–34; Mario Liverani, *Prestige and Interest: International Relations in the Near East ca. 1600–1100 B.C.*, HANE/S 1 (Padova: Sargon, 1990); Tadmor, "Propaganda, Literature, Historiography: Cracking the Code of the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in *Assyria 1995: Proceedings of the Tenth Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project Helsinki, September 7–11, 1995*, ed. Simo Parpola and Robert M. Whiting (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1997), 325–38; Frederick Mario Fales, "Assyrian Royal Inscriptions: Newer Horizons," *SAAB* 13 (1999): 115–44.

[16] For a survey of these genres, see Anthony J. Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians*, YNER 9 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

[17] Sarah C. Melville, *The Campaigns of Sargon II, King of Assyria, 721–705 B.C.*, Campaigns and Commanders (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2016), 10; however, others have a more suspicious perspective; for example, see Mattias Karlsson, *Relations of Power in Early Neo-Assyrian State Ideology*, SANER 10 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016), 12–13.

[18] Bertrand Lafont, "The Army of the Kings of Ur: The Textual Evidence," *Cuneiform Digital Library Journal* 5 (2009): 20, http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394c.

position of a scribe was the best profession by highlighting the difficulties of the other professions that a young man might choose, including the army. Since the authors were prejudiced against the military and as a scribe they would have most likely also misunderstood warfare, the anti-military scribal texts must be used cautiously in reconstructing Egyptian warfare. [19]

Although myths are not cited extensively in this book, they should not be ignored in studying warfare, as they reveal to us in how people view the world.[20] Poetic texts speak of warfare on occasions, such as the laments. In a few cases, even mathematical texts refer to warfare. However, while all these kinds of texts can be mined for information about warfare, their focus is not on providing an accurate picture of warfare, and great restraint should be employed. Ritual texts provide us a glimpse into how the military perceived the connection between the gods and warfare; many rituals were conducted before and after battles to gain the favor of the gods. The ritual texts can most likely be trusted to provide an accurate description of the rituals performed, though the meaning and significance of these rituals is often not clear.

One of the most contested texts relating to historicity in the ancient Near East is the Old Testament. Given the massive amount of scholarship on the topic, this is not the place to enter into the debate.[21] Although it is important to recognize that many doubt the historicity of larger or smaller portions of the Old Testament, simply rejecting the Old Testament entirely as a source of warfare material does not seem to be the best way forward (especially since the historicity of many other texts throughout the ancient Near East is also doubted). This book will take a compromise approach by focusing mostly on the least controversial portion of the Old Testament, the time of the divided monarchy.

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[19] Anthony J. Spalinger, “The Paradise of Scribes and the Tartarus of Soldiers,” in *Five Views on Egypt*, LingAegSM 6 (Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie, 2006), 5–50.

[20] Bustenay Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire: Justifications for War in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1992), 4.

[21] For recent discussion, see Megan Bishop Moore and Brad E. Kelle, *Biblical History and Israel’s Past: The Changing Study of the Bible and History* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011); Iain Provan, V. Philips Long, and Tremper Longman III, *A Biblical History of Israel*, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015).

Alongside texts, another major source of information about warfare is the reliefs depicting warfare. Since most of these reliefs are royal reliefs, they employ the same perspective as the royal annals and suffer from similar pitfalls in their employment to reconstruct historical events. Other reliefs have been found in tombs (especially in Egypt) or on seals. Although these might be somewhat more reliable than the royal reliefs, they are still produced by the elite who are trying to influence either the gods or the people around them for their own benefit and must also be used with caution. Finally, some information about warfare can be gleaned from archaeology, especially about fortifications, weapons, and armor. They might seem to be the more trustworthy pieces of evidence, but they still require a high level of interpretation at both a basic level (dating and function) and a higher level (what they actually tell us about warfare). Their use is further complicated by the question of unprovenanced artifacts.

1.3. Structure of the Book

Since the topic of warfare in the ancient Near East is so wide-ranging, structuring a book of this type is difficult. The typical path taken is to divide the material into larger sections based on geography and time period, within which a series of smaller sections describe various aspects of warfare.[22] The strength of this approach is to ensure that warfare is clearly presented within its historical and geographical context, but the drawback is that it makes it difficult to find all the material on a certain topic. For example, if one wanted to read about sieges, then the reader must employ the index or the table of contents to find the appropriate section within each geographical unit and time period. This book will swap the normal pattern by making the larger sections based on various aspects of warfare, with smaller sections within each chapter based on geography and time period. Such a structure will allow the book to be more easily used as a reference book.

The first half of the book will roughly follow the temporal order of a stereotypical war. After this introduction, chapter 2 will address the various *casus belli* of nations in the ancient Near East, dividing them into categories of defense, protection against chaos, and acquisition. A final section in the chapter will examine why nations sometimes did not go to war. Chapter 3 will move on to examine how nations prepared for warfare, including studies of communication with the enemy, military intelligence, mustering troops, marching to war, the king's role before battle, and preparing defenses. Chapter 4 will focus on the battles themselves, including open-field battles, communication during battle, the role of chariots and cavalry, sieges, naval combat, single combat, deception in warfare, and the participation of the kings in battle. Chapter 5 will examine the results of battle, incorporating flight, the taking of prisoners and plunder, the humiliation of enemies, urbicide, extermination of enemies, the political and religious results of conquest, other responses to victory and defeat, and conflicted memories.

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[22] E.g., Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC.*

The second half of the book will look at selected topics related to warfare. A study of officers and soldiers will be the focus of chapter 6, exploring the command structure of ancient Near Eastern armies, the size of armies, the role of military scribes, the training of soldiers, the life of a soldier on campaign, the actions of problematic soldiers, and the fate of missing and killed soldiers. Weapons and armor are the topic in chapter 7, divided into short-range weapons, long-range weapons, and defensive equipment. Finally, chapter 8 considers the role of divine warriors, including divine combat, calls for divine help, messages from the divine warrior, divine abandonment, divine weapons and incorporation into myths, and the role of the divine warrior in battle.

1.4. Cultural and Geographical Groupings

Since the ancient Near East contains far too many diverse cultures to cover for every single topic, for the sake of presentation in this book they have been gathered into six different groups to illustrate some level of the diversity throughout the ancient Near East without inundating the reader with too much detail. The following section will describe these six groups, highlighting the main sources of information about warfare from each group.

Most broadly, fours volumes contain texts and images that address warfare from a wide variety of cultures and will be frequently cited in this book by their abbreviations. Two prominent sources were edited by James B. Pritchard: *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* (*ANET*) and *Ancient Near Eastern Pictures* (*ANEP*).[23] More recent sources include William W. Hallo and

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[23] James B. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts: Relating to the Old Testament*, 3rd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969); Pritchard, *The Ancient Near*

K. Lawson Younger's *The Context of Scripture* (*COS*) and Mark W. Chavalas's *The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation* (*ANEHST*).[24]

1.4.1. Egyptian

The first major cultural group we will examine in each section is the Egyptians.[25] The majority of the information about warfare comes from the New Kingdom (the Eighteenth through Twentieth Dynasties), but the period covered will extend from the First Dynasty through the beginning of the Persian period.[26] A three-volume series by Miriam Lichtheim entitled *Ancient Egyptian Literature* (*AEL*) contains many Egyptian texts of a variety of genres, as does a volume edited by William Kelly Simpson entitled *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*.[27] The main military texts from Egypt are the annals from the pharaohs, especially those of the New Kingdom. These annals are found in the five-volume work of James Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (*ARE*), though it is now quite dated.[28] Updated English translations of the annals can be found in a variety of places today:

East in Pictures Relating to the Old Testament, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

[24] William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger Jr., eds., *Context of Scripture*, 3 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 1997–2002); K. Lawson Younger Jr., ed., *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 4 (Leiden: Brill, 2016); Mark W. Chavalas, ed., *The Ancient Near East: Historical Sources in Translation*, BSAH (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006).

[25] For general works on warfare in Egypt, see Alan R. Schulman, *Military Rank, Title and Organization in the Egyptian New Kingdom*, MÄS 6 (Berlin: Hassling, 1964); Robert B. Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs: Weapons and Warfare in Ancient Egypt* (Manchester: Peartree, 2002); Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*.

[26] For more on the history of Egypt, see Nicolas Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, trans. Ian Shaw (Oxford: Blackwell, 1988); Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*, RHAW (London: Routledge, 1995), 1:118–24, 317–30; 2:623–46; Marc Van de Mieroop, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, BHAW (Malden, MA: Wiley, 2010).

[27] Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature: A Book of Readings*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973–1980); William Kelly Simpson, ed., *The Literature of Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Stories, Stelae, Autobiographies, and Poetry*, 3rd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003).

[28] James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt: Historical Documents*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1906). See also *ANET*, 227–64, 553–55; *COS* 2.1–7:5–51.

1. Six volumes of texts from the Eighteenth Dynasty by Barbara Cumming and Benedict Davies;[29]
2. A comprehensive series on the *Ramesside Inscriptions* mainly by Kenneth Kitchen (the translation volumes are abbreviated *RITA*);[30]
3. A volume on late Egyptian texts by Robert K. Ritner.[31]

Many nonroyal inscriptions from Egypt have also been discovered. Along with Kitchen's *Ramesside Inscriptions* series, a selection of these can also be found in other volumes.[32] Although not to the same extent as Mesopotamia, some letters from Egypt have survived.[33] The most famous are the Amarna letters (identified with the abbreviation EA and a number), mostly written to the pharaoh from Canaan.[34] Much poetic material has been recovered from Egypt; of these texts the hymns provide us with limited information about warfare (especially the divine warriors and the role of the king in battle).[35]

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[29] For two examples from this series, see Barbara Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1982); Benedict G. Davies, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 4* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1992).

[30] This very expensive set has three corresponding series: the hieroglyphic texts, English translations, and commentary; for the second volume of translations covering Ramesses II, see K. A. Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions Translated and Annotated: Translations; Ramesses II, Royal Inscriptions* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

[31] Robert K. Ritner, *The Libyan Anarchy: Inscriptions from Egypt's Third Intermediate Period*, WAW 21 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009).

[32] William J. Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, WAW 5 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995); Nigel C. Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, ed. Ronald J. Leprohon, WAW 16 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005); Elizabeth Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, WAW 26 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007); Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies Chiefly of the Middle Kingdom: A Study and an Anthology*, OBO 84 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988).

[33] Edward Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, WAW 1 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990).

[34] *ANET*, 483–90; *COS* 3.92:237–42; *ANEHST*, 186–210; William L. Moran, ed., *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992); Anson F. Rainey, *The El-Amarna Correspondence: A New Edition of the Cuneiform Letters from the Site of El-Amarna Based on Collations of All Extant Tablets*, ed. William Schniedewind and Zipora Cochavi-Rainey, 2 vols., HdO 110 (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

[35] *ANET*, 365–81; *COS* 1.25–28:37–46; John L. Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs: An Anthology of Ancient Egyptian Lyric Poetry*, WAW 8 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995).

Egyptian myths are collected in a variety of places, while a few rituals relate to warfare.[36]

Many images have been discovered in modern times from ancient Egypt that relate to warfare.[37] Although a handful of pictures depicting battles come from the Old and Middle Kingdom, the vast majority are from the New Kingdom (especially the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties).[38] The most helpful collections of these reliefs are the second volume of the older *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* by Walter Wreszinski and the more recent *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches: Eine Bildanalyse* by Susanna Constanze Heinz (which contains line drawings of all the martial reliefs of the New Kingdom).[39] Other more accessible collections of pictures from ancient Egypt can be found in *ANEP* and Anthony Spalinger's *War in Ancient Egypt*. The University of Chicago has published several volumes of reliefs from pharaohs (many are also available for free download from their website); the most important for this book are from Seti I, Ramesses II, and Ramesses III.[40]

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[36] Myths: *ANET*, 1–36; *COS* 1.1–24:5–36. Rituals: *ANET*, 325–30; *COS* 1.32:50–52.

[37] For a discussion of many of these war reliefs, see G. A. Gaballa, *Narrative in Egyptian Art* (Mainz: von Zabern, 1976).

[38] One of the more well known is an attack on an Asiatic fortress in the tomb of Anta in in *ANEP*, 101, no. 311; Walter Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1935), 2:4. For a survey of the Middle Kingdom images, see Alan R. Schulman, "The Battle Scenes of the Middle Kingdom," *JSSEA* 12 (1982): 165–83; a complete lists of visual images of battle in Egypt is compiled in Ian Shaw, "Battle in Ancient Egypt: The Triumph of Horus or the Cutting Edge of the Temple Economy," in *Battle in Antiquity*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd (London: Duckworth, 1996), 258–61.

[39] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*; Susanna Constanze Heinz, *Die Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches: Eine Bildanalyse* (Vienna: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001).

[40] Sety I: Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4: The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, OIP 107 (Chicago: Oriental Institute, 1986). Ramesses II: James Henry Breasted, *The Battle of Kadesh: A Study in the Earliest Known Military Strategy*, Decennial Publications 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903); Herbert Ricke, George R. Hughes, and Edward F. Wente, *The Beit El-Wali Temple of Ramesses II*, OIP Nubian Expedition 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967). Ramesses III: Harold H. Nelson, ed., *Medinet Habu 1: Earlier Historical Records of Ramses III*, OIP 8 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930); Harold H. Nelson, ed., *Medinet Habu 2: Later Historical Records of Ramses III*, OIP 9 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1932).

Having surveyed the sources, we will now turn to a brief history of ancient Egypt. Although various traces of warfare can be found in predynastic Egypt, the first extensive reference to it is the Narmer Palette, symbolizing the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt by Narmer, who is usually identified with Menes of the First Dynasty. Egypt's power solidified during the Early Dynastic period (First and Second Dynasties) and flowered during the Old Kingdom of Egypt (Third through Sixth Dynasties), though unfortunately the references to warfare are scarce.[41] The centralized power of Egypt weakened during the First Intermediate period (Seventh through Eleventh Dynasties), leading to powerful local leaders who ruled their own armies.

Centralized power was slowly restored in the Middle Kingdom (Twelfth through Thirteenth Dynasties), when a stronger army was established and Egypt was able to conquer Nubia to the south. Though they did not militarily conquer the Levant, they were able to establish extensive trading routes there. However, the unity of the Middle Kingdom disappeared during the Thirteenth Dynasty and various competing dynasties were established during the Second Intermediate period (Thirteenth through Seventeenth Dynasties). Further, not only were the Egyptians fighting each other, but the foreign Hyksos (most likely from Canaan) entered Egypt and ruled large parts of it for at least a century.

Most of the information about Egyptian warfare comes from the powerful New Kingdom (Eighteenth through Twentieth Dynasties), when the military rose to a position of new prominence and Egypt greatly expanded its territory in all directions. Ahmose drove the Hyksos out of Egypt (as recorded in the tomb of one of his officers, also named Ahmose) and established the Eighteenth Dynasty. Thutmose III was one of the most powerful pharaohs of this dynasty and famously defeated the combined Canaanite kings at Megiddo.[42] His son Amenhotep II strengthened Egypt's hold on the Levant and established peaceful relations with Mitanni, far to the northeast. About fifty years later, Amenhotep IV declared his allegiance to Aten the sungod, changed his name to Akhenaten, rejected much of traditional Egyptian religion, and moved the Egyptian capital to el-Amarna. Since details of his military campaigns are unknown, some have suggested that he was pacifistic, but it is more likely that the Egyptians were overwhelmingly powerful and did not need to mount expeditions to control their territories. A trove of letters (called the Amarna letters) written to him by Canaanite kings details their relationships to each other and to other great powers. Akhenaten's son Tutankhamen moved the capital back to Thebes and restored traditional aspects of Egyptian religion. His famous tomb, discovered by Howard Carter, has provided a cache of weapons and many other items related to warfare that greatly increased our understanding of war in the New Kingdom. The general Horemheb was the final pharaoh of the dynasty, seizing power when the elderly Ay died (who had himself been an adviser to Tutankhamen before becoming pharaoh).

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[41] For surveys of warfare in Egypt during this period, see Gregory Phillip Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, BARIS 1208 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2004); Juan Carlos Moreno García, "War in Old Kingdom Egypt (2686–2125 BCE)," in *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East: Collected Essays on Military History*, ed. Jordi Vidal, AOAT 372 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2010), 5–42.

[42] For more on the battle at Megiddo and Thutmose as a warrior, see Hans Goedicke, *The Battle of Megiddo* (Baltimore: Halgo, 2000); Donald B. Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, CHANE 16 (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Redford, "The Northern Wars of Thutmose III," in *Thutmose III: A New Biography*, ed. Eric H. Cline and David O'Connor (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 325–43;

The Nineteenth Dynasty began with the vizier of Horemheb, Ramesses I (Horemheb lacked any sons). Ramesses I only reigned for a short time before his death, when his son Seti I became pharaoh and strengthened the Egyptian presence outside their land, especially in areas to the north that were similarly claimed by the Hittites (he also fought the Libyans to the west and Nubians to the south). Seti I's son Ramesses II fought the Hittites at the legendary battle of Qadesh, which he memorialized in several written accounts and reliefs.[43] Even though Ramesses II declared the battle a great Egyptian success, it appears that it was more of a draw.[44] A few years

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Richard A. Gabriel, *Thutmose III: A Military Biography of Egypt's Greatest Warrior King* (Washington, DC: Potomac, 2009).

[43] Translations of these accounts are readily accessible; see *ARE* 4:125–57; *AEL* 2:57–72; *COS* 2.5:32–40; *RITA* 2.3:2–26; Benedict G. Davies, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty*, DMA 2 (Jonsered: Åströms, 1997), 55–95.

[44] Much has been published on this battle, see Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*; Alan Gardiner, *The Kadesh Inscriptions of Ramesses II* (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1960); K. A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant: The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt* (Warminster: Aris & Phillips, 1982); Hans Goedicke, ed., *Perspectives on the Battle of Kadesh* (Baltimore: Halgo, 1985); M. J. de Bruyn, "The Battle of Qadesh: Some Reconsiderations," in *To the Euphrates and Beyond: Archaeological Studies in Honour of Maurits N. van Loon*, ed. O. M. C. Haex, H. H. Curvers, and P. M. M. G. Akkermans (Rotterdam: Balkema, 1989), 135–66; D. Parayre, "La Bataille de Qadesh," *DoArch* 160 (1991): 78–81; Antonio Santosuosso, "Kadesh Revisited: Reconstructing the Battle

later he signed a peace treaty with the Hittites and the two nations never fought again. The Libyans continued to attack Egypt, leading Ramesses II to construct a chain of fortresses on his western border. He also defeated the Sherden pirates and Nubians. His son Merenptah, the last great pharaoh of the Nineteenth Dynasty, campaigned in Libya and Canaan, including against Israel.

After beginning with the short reign of Setnakht, the Twentieth Dynasty continued with Ramesses III, who was forced to repel both the Libyans and the Sea People. By the end of the Twentieth Dynasty, Egypt had greatly weakened and was beginning to splinter between different power bases of kings in Tanis and the priesthood of Amun in Thebes. This weakness continued through most of the Third Intermediate period (Twenty-First through Twenty-Fifth Dynasties). Sheshonq I, descended from the Libyans, began the Twenty-Second Dynasty and reunited Egypt for a time, but after a century the nation began to splinter again and pharaohs from the Twenty-Second, Twenty-Third, and Twenty-Fourth Dynasties ruled various portions of Egypt simultaneously. Nubian kings took advantage of this chaos by conquering part of Egypt, as recorded in the inscriptions of Piye, who began the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty. The Nubians restored Egypt's power to a limited extent, but they were eventually defeated by the Assyrians. The Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, the final within the time range of this book, began with Psamtik I, a vassal king of the Assyrians until he gained his independence. The dynasty ended when the Persians conquered the country.

1.4.2. Hittite

The second major category covers the Hittite Empire in Anatolia during the second millennium.[45] The main texts concerning warfare from the

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Between the Egyptians and the Hittites," *JMH* 60 (1996): 423–44; Anthony J. Spalinger, "Epigraphs in the Battle of Kadesh Reliefs," *ErIs 27* (2003): 222*–39*.

[45] For an overview of warfare among the Hittites, see Albrecht Goetze, "Warfare in Asia Minor," *Iraq* 25 (1963): 124–30; Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*; Beal, "Hittite Military Organization," *CANE* 1:545–54; Jürgen Lorenz and Ingo Schrakamp, "'Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!' The Fate and Role of Non-Combatants in the Wars of the Hittites," in *The Other Face of the Battle: The Impact of War on Civilians in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Davide Nadali and Jordi Vidal, AOAT 413 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 37–64.

Hittites are the royal annals, especially those connected with Anitta, Suppiluliuma, and Mursili II.[46] Hittite texts are identified by a wide variety of abbreviations (*KBo* and *KUB* are common), but almost every Hittite text has a *CTH* number (*Catalogue des textes hittites*), based on the work begun by Emmanuel Laroche.[47] A large number of letters has been published by Harry Hoffner that helpfully illustrate more of the mundane aspects of warfare.[48] Another important collection of texts relating to warfare is the treaties, which have been translated by Gary Beckman (along with other diplomatic material).[49] Kenneth Kitchen and Paul Lawrence have compiled all the treaties from the ancient Near East in their volume *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East* (abbreviated in this book as *TLC*).[50] Other genres discuss warfare on occasion, including myths, prayers, legal material and instructions, and rituals.[51] Hittite reliefs depicting warfare are rare; the most relevant images are figures of warriors (both human and divine).[52]

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[46] *ANET*, 318–20; *COS* 1.72–77:182–203; 2.1–2:79–90; *ANEHST*, 216–79; Trevor Bryce, *The Major Historical Texts of Early Hittite History*, Asian Studies Monograph 1 (St. Lucia: University of Queensland, 1983).

[47] The website Hethitologie Portal Mainz (www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de) contains both a list of all Hittite texts by *CTH* number and an index (Kondoranz) that allows users to find *CTH* numbers connected to other abbreviations.

[48] Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, ed. Gary Beckman, WAW 15 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2009); see also *COS* 3.13–32:45–54.

[49] Gary Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 2nd ed., WAW 7 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999); for other translations, see *ANET*, 199–206, 529–30; *COS* 2.17–18:91–105.

[50] Kenneth A. Kitchen and Paul J. N. Lawrence, *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East*, 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012).

[51] Myths: *ANET*, 120–28; 519; *COS* 1.55–59:149–55; Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *Hittite Myths*, 2nd ed., ed. Gary Beckman, WAW 2 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998). Prayers: *ANET*, 393–401; *COS* 1.60:156–60; Itamar Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, WAW 11 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002). Legal material: *ANET*, 207–11; *COS* 2.19:106–19; Martha T. Roth, *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*, 2nd ed., WAW 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 213–47; Jared L. Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions and Related Administrative Texts*, ed. Mauro Giorgieri, WAW 31 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013). Rituals: *ANET*, 346–61; *COS* 1.61–67:160–67; Richard H. Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," in *Ancient Magic and Ritual Power*, ed. Marvin Meyer and Paul Mirecki, RGRW 129 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 63–76.

[52] For collections of images from Asia Minor, see Helmuth Th. Bosssert, *Altanatolien: Kunst und Handwerk in Kleinasien von den Anfängen bis zum völligen Aufgehen in der griechischen Kultur*, Ältesten Kulturen des Mittelmeerkreises 2

We turn now to a brief survey of the history of the Hittites.[53]Assyrian traders in the area around 1900 BCE provide early textual evidence of conditions in the area, but their documents provide little information about warfare. One of the earliest martial texts from the area originates from Anitta of Kussara (around 1750), who recorded in the Proclamation of Anitta how his father Pithana had conquered Nesa (Kanesh) and Hattusa and cursed whoever would rebuild the latter city (ironically, Hattusa later became the capital of the Hittites). The beginning of the Hittite kingdom a century later is shrouded in obscurity, but Hattusili I and Mursili I were two of the earliest kings who recorded their martial deeds. Mursili I even defeated Aleppo and raided Babylon in 1595, destroying the still-important dynasty of Hammurabi. However, after this time of expansion the Hittite state went through a time of uncertainty when many kings were assassinated.

The Hittite Empire began with Tudhaliya in about 1430. The later king Suppiluliuma I strengthened the empire and expanded their control, especially in the east where he sacked the capital city of Mitanni and took over much of Syria (including the important city of Carchemish). When a plague killed him (and most likely also his son Arnuwanda II), Mursili II, another son of Suppiluliuma, became king. Mursili II strengthened Hittite control of Syria and conquered large parts of Arzawa to the west. Finally, he also pushed back the Kaska people, loosely organized groups of people to the north that constantly threatened the Hittites throughout most of Hittite history. Although the Kaska sometimes sought simply to plunder the Hittites, at other times they were forced by other factors to enter Hittite land; for example, one letter describes how a locust plague in Kaska land had driven them to take the Hittite crops.[54] Mursili II's son Muwatalli strengthened Hittite control of Syria again when he held the Egyptian pharaoh Ramesses II at Qadesh. Hittite control weakened during the reign of

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(Berlin: Wasmuth, 1942); Ekrem Akurgal, *The Art of the Hittites* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1962).

[53] For more on the history of second-millennium Anatolia, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 1:90–92, 225–82; Trevor Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 2005); Marc van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East ca. 3000–323 BC*, 3rd ed., BHAW (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2016), 127–31, 165–74; Mario Liverani, *The Ancient Near East: History, Society and Economy*, trans. Soraia Tabatabai, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2014), 256–67, 303–24.

[54] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 130 (*CTH* 186).

Tudhaliya IV as Assyria encroached on their land in the east and control of vassals in the west was lost. For unknown reasons, Hattusa was violently destroyed and the Hittite Empire ended around 1200. The Hittite legacy continued among the Neo-Hittite cites in Syria, which will be included in the West Semitic category below.

1.4.3. Early Mesopotamian

This category will include all the land near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (covering most of modern Iraq) from roughly 3000–1500 BCE.[55] Broad collections of literature from this time period can be found in a variety of anthologies.[56] The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (abbreviated ETCSL and available online) is a convenient source for the translation of many Sumerian texts.[57] As usual, one of the most important sources for information on warfare is the annals of the kings, which have been helpfully collected in the Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Early Period series (RIME).[58] Along with the annals, the chronicles provide important perspectives on warfare during this time.[59]

Letters play an important role in reconstructing the history of early Mesopotamia.[60] In particular, the vast trove of letters from Mari provides a rich glimpse at real life in an ancient Near Eastern kingdom. The letters have been published in French in the Archives Royales de Mari series and are usually identified with their ARM number (which includes the volume number followed by the text number).[61] The series by Jean-Marie Durand, *Les documents épistolaires du palais de Mari* (since this series was published as part of the broader series Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient, they have been abbreviated LAPO 16–18) gathers them together by topic; the second volume (LAPO 17) is largely dedicated to warfare.[62] Likewise, Jack Sasson has collected many Mari texts by topic and translated them into English, while Wolfgang Heimpel translated every letter of ARM 26 and 27 into English.[63] Mari letters in this book will be identified primarily by ARM and LAPO numbers, as well as a reference to Sasson's *From the Mari Archives* if it was included there.[64]

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[55] For general overviews of warfare in early Mesopotamia, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*.

[56] Jeremy Black et al., *The Literature of Ancient Sumer* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps That Once … Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Benjamin R. Foster, *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2005).

[57] See http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394b.

[58] Douglas Frayne, *Presargonic Period (2700–2350 BC)*, RIME 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Frayne, *Sargonic and Gutian Periods (2334–2113 BC)*, RIME 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993); Dietz Otto Edzard, *Gudea and His Dynasty*, RIME 3.1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Frayne, *Ur III Period (2112–2004 BC)*, RIME 3.2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Frayne, *Old Babylonian Period (2003–1595 BC)*, RIME 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); for other translations, see *ANET*, 267–68; *COS* 2.89–112:241–61, 2.138–143:385–97; *ANEHST*, 9–106.

[59] *ANET*, 269–74; A. Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000); Jean-Jacque Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, ed. Benjamin R. Foster, WAW 19 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004).

[60] Piotr Michalowski, *Letters from Early Mesopotamia*, ed. Erica Reiner, WAW 3 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993); Jesper Eidem, *The Royal Archives from Tell Leilan: Old*

Other genres from early Mesopotamia refer to warfare, including laws, laments, and the epics and myths.[65] Many reliefs also survive from

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Babylonian Letters and Treaties from the Lower Town Palace East, PIHANS 117 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2011); Eidem and Jørgen Læssøe, *The Shemshara Archves 1: The Letters*, HistFilosSkr 23 (Denmark: Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, 2001); Piotr Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur: An Epistolary History of an Ancient Mesopotamian Kingdom*, MC 15 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011).

[61] The website Archibab (http://www.archibab.fr/en/accueil.htm) provides both the Akkadian text and French translations of most of the published Mari letters.

[62] Jean-Marie Durand, *Les documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, LAPO 17 (Paris: Cerf, 1998); some authors abbreviate these works as *DEPM* 1–3 rather than LAPO 16–18.

[63] Jack M. Sasson, *From the Mari Archives: An Anthology of Old Babylonian Letters* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015). Wolfgang Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari: A New Translation, with Historical Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*, MC 12 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003); for other translations of select letters from Mari into English, see *ANET*, 482–83; *ANEHST*, 111–32; Martti Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, WAW 12 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003).

[64] For example, a letter from Ibal-pi-El about an ambush is found in multiple sources: ARM 2.22 = LAPO 17.585 = Sasson 3.4.b.ii; this particular letter is also found in Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 473–74; Stephanie Dalley, *Mari and Karana: Two Old Babylonian Cities* (New York: Longman, 1984), 150.

[65] Laws: *ANET*, 159–98, 523–28; *COS* 2.130–133:332–62, 2.152–154:407–414; Roth, *Law Collections*. Laments: *ANET*, 455–63, 611–19; *COS* 1.166: 535–39; Nili Samet, *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur*, MC 18 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014). Epics and myths: *ANET*, 37–119; 501–18; *COS* 1.108–113:381–415,

this time period and enhance our understanding of warfare.[66] Some of the most famous include the Standard of Ur, the Victory Stela of Naram-Sin, and the Stela of Vultures.[67]

The history of early Mesopotamia is replete with records of warfare.[68] One of the first wars recorded was that between the Sumerian cities of Umma and Lagash during the Early Dynastic Period. According to Eanatum, a later king of Lagash, Umma had taken territory belonging to Lagash, leading Lagash to attack and defeat Umma. Following the Early Dynastic Period, the first great military texts are from Sargon the Great of Akkad and his descendants, sometimes called the Old Akkadian Empire or the Sargonic Period. Sargon the Great created a large empire based around the city of Akkad (he also was responsible for employing Akkadian rather than Sumerian as the central language), subjugating many of the surrounding city-states. His sons Rimush and Manishtushu strengthened this empire and his grandson Naram-Sin continued to expand the empire to its greatest lengths (from Syria to Iran). After his death the empire began to gradually decline, and other city-states became independent with their own kings, such as Utu-hegal of Uruk. The last great empire of the third millennium was the Third Dynasty of Ur. Ur-Nammu, who founded the dynasty, was a governor under Utu-hegal before he became king himself. He died in battle against the Gutians and was succeeded by his son Shulgi. The Third Dynasty of Ur lasted about a century before it disintegrated and the city of Ur fell, as recorded in the Lamentations of Ur.

Second-millennium Mesopotamia saw many different groups rise to power at different places. Isin and Larsa were two early dynasties in

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1.129–133:449–61, 1.157–1.161:511–25, 1.170–171:547–52; Benjamin R. Foster, ed., *The Epic of Gilgamesh: A New Translation, Analogues, Criticism* (New York: Norton, 2001); Joan Goodnick Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade: The Texts*, MC 7 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997).

[66] For an overview of art from early Mesopotamia, see Eva Strommenger, *Five Thousand Years of the Art of Mesopotamia* (New York: Abrams, 1964).

[67] Standard of Ur: *ANEP*, 97, no. 303 (BM 121201); for large color pictures, see Joan Aruz, ed., *Art of the First Cities: The Third Millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2003), 97–100. Victory Stela of Naram-Sin: *ANEP*, 100, no. 309 (Louvre Sb 4). Stela of Vultures: *ANEP*, 95, nos. 298–302 (Louvre AO 16109).

[68] For more on the history of early Mesopotamia, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 1:19–117, 332–81; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 133–255; Mieroop, *History of the Ancient Near East*, 21–126.

southern Mesopotamia, especially the powerful Rim-Sin of Larsa. In northern Mesopotamia, the kings based in Assur established a far-flung trade network (extensively attested in Anatolia) but were conquered by the Amorite chieftain Shamshi-Adad I around 1800. He greatly expanded Assyrian territory by ruling parts of it directly (such as Assur and Nineveh), installing his sons as subordinate kings at Mari (Yasmah-Adad) and Ekallate (Ishme-Dagan), and allowing a few vassal kings to continue to rule their own territory (Karana). However, his empire quickly disintegrated when he died and Zimri-Lim, the descendant of earlier kings of Mari, regained power in the city.[69]

Further to the south, Hammurabi rose to power in Babylon as a weaker ally of Shamshi-Adad of Assyria and Rim-Sin of Larsa.[70] He conquered Rim-Sin and turned Larsa into a Babylonian province. Hammurabi eventually attacked Mari when it became a vassal of Eshnunna and defeated both of them. His empire gradually declined after his death until the city of Babylon was sacked by the Hittite king Mursili I in 1595.

1.4.4. Assyrian

The Neo-Assyrian Empire was one of the most militarily powerful empires in the ancient Near East.[71] This section will cover not only the later Neo-

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[69] For an overview of the reign of Zimri-Lim, see Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 37–163.

[70] Much has been written on Hammurabi; see Marc van de Mieroop, *King Hammurabi of Babylon: A Biography*, BAL (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005); Dominique Charpin, *Hammurabi of Babylon* (London: Tauris, 2012).

[71] For general works on warfare in the Neo-Assyrian Empire, see Florence Malbran-Labat, *L'armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie: D'après les lettres des Sargonides trouvées à Ninive*, HEO 19 (Geneva: Droz, 1982); Tamás Dezső, "A Reconstruction of the Neo-Assyrian Army as Depicted on the Assyrian Palace Reliefs, 745–612 B. C.," *AAASH* 57 (2006): 87–130; Frederick Mario Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie: Religion et impérialisme*, Les conférences de l'école pratique des hautes études 2 (Paris: Cerf, 2010); Andreas Fuchs, "Assyria at War," in *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, ed. Karen Radner and Eleanor Robson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 380–401; Tamás Dezső, *The Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, Assyriologia 8.1 (Budapest: Eötvös University Press, 2012); Dezső, *The Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, Assyriologia 8.2 (Budapest: Eötvös University Press, 2012); Dezső, *The Assyrian Army (2): Recruitment and Logistics*, Assyriologia 9 (Budapest: Eötvös University Press, 2016).

Assyrian Empire, but also the earlier Middle Assyrian kingdom of the late second millennium. One of the most important sources of warfare material is from the annals written by the Assyrian kings. Most of these annals have been published in either the Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia: Assyrian Period series (RIMA) or the Royal Inscriptions of Neo-Assyrian Period series (RINAP).[72] The RINAP volumes have also been published online.[73] These have also been published in the now-dated *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylon* (*ARAB*) by Daniel Luckenbill.[74] Along with the annals, the chronicles provide important perspectives on warfare during this time.[75]

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[72] RIMA: A. Kirk Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Third and Second Millennia BC (to 1115 BC)*, RIMA 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987); Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC I (1114–859 BC)*, RIMA 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991); Grayson, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC II (858–745 BC)*, RIMA 3 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). RINAP: Hayim Tadmor and Shigeo Yamada, *The Royal Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III (744–727 BC) and Shalmaneser V (726–722 BC), Kings of Assyria*, RINAP 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011); A. Kirk Grayson and Jamie Novotny, *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BC), Part 1*, RINAP 3.1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012); Grayson and Novotny, *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BC), Part 2*, RINAP 3.2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014); Erle Leichty, *The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)*, RINAP 4 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011). At the time of publication, the volumes on Sargon II and Assurbanipal have not seen the light of day; for recent German translations from these kings see Andreas Fuchs, *Die Inschriften Sargons II. aus Khorsabad* (Göttingen: Cuvillier, 1994); R. Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals: die Prismenklassen A, B, C = K, D, E, F, G, H, J, und T sowie andere Inschriften* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1996).

[73] See http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394f.

[74] Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 2 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1927); for other translations, see *ANET*, 274–301, 558–60; *COS* 2.113–120:261–306; *ANEHST*, 141–59, 282–98, 332–72; Daniel David Luckenbill, *The Annals of Sennacherib*, OIP 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1924); Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, AS 5 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1933); Hayim Tadmor, *The Inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III King of Assyria: Critical Edition, with Introductions, Translations and Commentary* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1994); Mordechai Cogan, *The Raging Torrent: Historical Inscriptions from Assyria and Babylonia Relating to Ancient Israel*, 2nd ed., Carta Handbook (Jerusalem: Carta, 2015).

[75] *ANET*, 269–74; *ANEHST*, 407–20; Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*; Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*.

A very large number of letters constitute the other major source of information about warfare. The cuneiform of many of these was published in the multivolume work *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters* by Harper, which provided them with *ABL* numbers.[76] Early translations in English included *Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire* by Waterman and *State Letters of Assyria* (*SLA*) by Pfeiffer.[77] In recent decades most of these letters have been translated as part of the State Archives of Assyria series (currently at nineteen volumes). Throughout this book these letters will be referenced by their SAA number.[78] Most helpfully, these SAA volumes are available online (not only are they fully searchable, but also many of them have been lematized) and provide both the Akkadian text and English translation, as well as other identifying numbers (such as the *ABL* number).[79]

Other genres that include material concerning warfare include treaties, prophecies (all from the time of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal), poetic texts of various kinds, administrative documents, and ritual texts.[80] Many reliefs have been discovered at Nimrud and Nineveh and are today mostly kept in the British Museum. The most important reliefs are from Assurnasirpal II, Shalmaneser III (the Balawat Gates), Tiglath-pileser III, Sennacherib, and Assurbanipal.[81]

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[76] 76. Robert Francis Harper, *Assyrian and Babylonian Letters Belonging to the Kouyunjik Collections of the British Museum*, 14 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1892–1914).

[77] 77. Leroy Waterman, *Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire: Translated into English, with a Transliteration of the Text and a Commentary*, 4 vols. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1930–1938); Robert H. Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria: A Transliteration and Translation of 355 Official Letters Dating from the Sargonid Period (722–625 B.C.)*, AOS 6 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1935).

[78] 78. For another set of recent translation of a portion of these letters, see H. W. F. Saggs, ed., *The Nimrud Letters, 1952*, Cuneiform Texts from Nimrud V (Great Britain: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 2001).

[79] 79. See http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394g.

[80] 80. Treaties: *ANET*, 532–41; SAA 2; Kitchen and Lawrence, *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East*. Prophecies: *ANET*, 449–52, 604–7; Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*; SAA 9. Poetic texts: SAA 3. Documents: Stephanie Dalley and J. N. Postgate, *The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, CTN 3 (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1984); SAA 6; SAA 7; SAA 11; SAA 12; SAA 14; SAA 4.

[81] 81. Assurnasirpal II: Although these reliefs are displayed prominently at the British Museum, a standard collection of all the reliefs of Assurnasirpal II has not been published. They can be seen on the website of the British Museum in a search for all

After the fall of Ishme-Dagan (referred to earlier in the section on early Mesopotamia), Assyria faded into obscurity for several centuries until the rise of the Middle Assyrian Empire in the middle of the fourteenth century with the reign of Assur-uballit I.[82] He and his descendants gradually increased Assyrian territory, especially through the defeat of Mitanni to the west. Tukulti-Ninurta I strengthened Assyria's hold on the west, but also conquered Babylon to the south. However, Assyrian control of Babylon was brief and the century following saw a decline of Assyria's influence and control. Tiglath-pileser I was able to strike far to the north and west to suppress raiders, but Assyrian control weakened again after his death.

This weakness continued until the beginning of the Neo-Assyrian period in the tenth century, when the Assyrian kings Adad-nirari II and Tukulti-Ninurta II began to reestablish control of lands that had formerly belonged to Middle Assyrian kings. Assurnasirpal II greatly expanded the Assyrian Empire in all directions, bringing great wealth and cultural advances (such as a new style of relief) to Assyria. His son Shalmaneser III focused on suppressing opposition in the west and Urartu to the north. However, after his death the Assyrian Empire stagnated for the next century, a time characterized by strong governors throughout Assyrian territories and growing Urartian power to the north.

Tiglath-pileser III more firmly established Assyrian control in many directions through his use of provincial governors, close control of vassal

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reliefs connected to the name Assurnasirpal II. For the Balawat Gates of Assurnasirpal II, see John Curtis and Nigel Tallis, eds., *The Balawat Gates of Ashurnasirpal II* (London: British Museum, 2008). Shalmaeser III: L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser* (London: British Museum, 1915); Andres Schachner, *Bilder eines Weltreichs : Kunst-und kulturgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zu den Verzierungen eines Tores aus Balawat (Imgur-Enlil) aus der Zeit von Salmanassar III, König von Assyrien*, Subartu 20 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007). Tiglath-pileser III: R. D. Barnett and M. Falkner, *The Sculptures of Aššur-Nasir-Apli II (883–859 B.C.), Tiglath-Pileser III (745–727 B.C.), and Esarhaddon (681–669 B.C.) from the Central and South-West Palaces at Nimrud* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1962). Sennacherib: R. D. Barnett, Erika Bleibtreu, and Geoffrey Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace of Sennacherib at Nineveh* (London: British Museum, 1998). Assurbanipal: R. D. Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668–627 BC)* (London: British Museum, 1976).

[82] For more on the history of Assyria, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 1:348–65; 2:473–546; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 207–20, 458–536; Mieroop, *History of the Ancient Near East*, 246–88.

kings, and invasion of Urartu. His son Shalmaneser V ruled only a few years but is famous for defeating Israel and converting it to a province. When Sargon II rose to power, he ruled a strong Assyrian Empire. However, although he was a son of Tiglath-pileser III, he apparently came to power by a coup and put down several rebellions early in his reign. He also faced pressure in the north from Urartu and Phyrgia (Mushki), which led to his famous eighth campaign in Urartu, recorded in great detail in a letter to Assur. Sargon II was able to consolidate Assyrian control over most of its land (including Babylon), but he was killed in a battle against the Cimmerians. His son Sennacherib focused on the Babylon problem and eventually destroyed the city. He also fought campaigns in several other areas in the Assyrian frontier, such as Syria and the Arabs. Sennacherib was assassinated by several of his sons, but another son, Esarhaddon, was able to seize power. Like his father, he fought many wars at the frontiers, most notably against Egypt. When he died on the way to Egypt, his son Assurbanipal became king and finished the conquest of Egypt. Another son of Esarhaddon, Shamash-shum-ukin, was appointed king of Babylon, but he rebelled against his brother Assurbanipal, who put down the rebellion and also conquered Elam (who had supported the rebellion). After his death, the Assyrian Empire fell within a few decades to the Babylonians and the Medes.

1.4.5. Later Empires

The Neo-Assyrian Empire was followed by the powerful Neo-Babylonian and Persian Empires.[83] Although it might be beneficial to give each of these empires their own category, the amount of material related to warfare from each of these empires is so minimal that it will be more efficient to include them both in the same category. The limited Babylonian material after the fall of Hammurabi's dynasty until the Neo-Babylonian Empire will also be included in this section. In contrast to the Assyrians, the Babylonians only rarely discussed warfare in their royal texts.[84] The chronicles continue to provide important perspectives on warfare during this time.[85] Letters and other material discussing warfare are also rare.

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[83] For general surveys of warfare in the Babylonian and Persian Empires, see Francis Joannés, "Guerre et économie dans l'Empire néo-babylonien," in *Économie antique: La guerre dans les économies antiques*, ed. Jean Andreau, Pierre Briant, and Raymond Descat, EAH 5 (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: Musée archéologique départemental, 2000), 63–82; Pierre Briant, "The Achaemenid Empire," in *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds: Asia, The Mediterranean, Europe, and Mesoamerica*, ed. Kurt Raaflaub and Nathan Rosenstein, CHSC 3 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 105–28; Pierre Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, trans. Peter T. Daniels (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002).

Although the Babylonians had a rich heritage, after the fall of Hammurabi's dynasty, the Kassites (perhaps from the Zagros Mountains) took advantage of the power vacuum and reigned in Babylon for four hundred years (unfortunately, the textual records of their reign are limited). After the fall of the Kassites, various other little-known kings ruled the area. One of the more famous was Nebuchadnezzar I of the Second Dynasty of Isin, who defeated Elam and enjoyed a small measure of success against Assyria. In the eighth century, the governor Ninurta-kudurri-usur effectively ruled as a king in Suhu (between Babylon and Assyria) during a time of Assyrian weakness.

The Neo-Babylonian Empire lasted approximately a century (626–539).[86] Esarhaddon initiated the return of Marduk's cult statue to Babylon and the reconstruction of the city of Babylon. He decreed that although Assurbanipal would rule Assyria after his death, another son, Shamash-shum-ukin, would rule Babylon. This division of power worked well for some time, but eventually Shamash-shum-ukin rebelled against his brother, leading to an Assyrian attack that brutally put down the rebellion. A few years after the death of Assurbanipal, Nabopolassar became the king of Babylon and fought many years to conquer large portions of the Assyrian Empire. His son Nebuchadnezzar II expanded the empire further to the west during his long reign, conquering Syria, Judah, and Egypt and making the Babylonian Empire larger than the previous Assyrian Empire. After a few short-lived kings, Nabonidus usurped the throne from Nebuchadnezzar II's dynasty but was defeated by Cyrus of Persia to mark the end of the Neo-Babylonian Empire.

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[84] *ANET*, 307–15, 560–64; *COS* 2.121–123:306–13; *ANEHST*, 383–96; Stephen Langdon, *Die Neubabylonischen Königsinschriften* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1912); Grant Frame, *Rulers of Babylonia From the Second Dynasty of Isin to the End of Assyrian Domination (1157–612 BC)*, RIMB 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Hanspeter Schaudig, *Die Inschriften Nabonids von Babylon und Kyros' des Grossen*, AOAT 256 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2001); Rocío Da Riva, *The Inscriptions of Nabopolassar, Amel-Marduk, and Neriglissar*, SANER 3 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013).

[85] *ANET*, 269–74; *ANEHST*, 407–20; Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*; Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*.

[86] For more on the history of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:573–622; Bill T. Arnold, *Who Were the Babylonians?*, ABS 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 87–105; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 537–53; Mieroop, *History of the Ancient Near East*, 289–306.

The Persians also have not left us abundant literature; it is minimal enough that the major sources, including the relevant sections of Greek authors (most prominently Herodotus), Old Testament citations, the few Persian royal inscriptions, and Persian administrative material, have all been collected into one book by Amélie Kuhrt.[87] The quotations from Herodotus included in this book are from the Loeb translation by A. D. Godley. Although Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* is widely viewed as at least partly fictional and most likely provides more of a Greek perspective on battle than Persian, his account of the life of Cyrus is referred to on a few occasions in this book (quotations are from the Loeb translation by Walter Miller). The Persians also did not discuss warfare to any great extent in their royal texts, though the Bisitun Inscription (often referred to with the abbreviation DB) is an exception.[88] The Cyrus Cylinder (written in Akkadian) also provides a glimpse at early Persian royal ideology.[89] Images from these empires are also rare.[90]

The Persian Empire began with Cyrus of Anshan (an important city that formerly belonged to Elam in the second millennium), who was part of a local dynasty and defeated the Median king Astyages in 550.[91] Cyrus proceeded to defeat Lydia in Anatolia, large portions of western Anatolia, and Nabonidus of Babylon. Greek tradition places the death of Cyrus in the east as he expanded the Persian Empire. His son Cambyses focused on conquering Egypt, but was killed in mysterious circumstances and replaced by Darius, a Persian noble. Large-scale revolt spread throughout the empire after his ascension, and it took him approximately a year to put down these revolts (as recorded in the Bisitun Inscription).[92] Persian history continued for many years after this, but the primary focus in this book is on the early period of their empire and will be based on Persian sources when possible rather than Greek texts.

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[87] Amélie Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire: A Corpus of Sources from the Achaemenid Period*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge, 2007); for another collection of the texts written in Persian, see Roland G. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, and Lexicon*, AOS 33 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1950).

[88] Jonas C. Greenfield and Bezalel Porten, *The Bisitun Inscription of Darius the Great: Aramaic Version*, CII 1.5 (London: Humphries, 1982); Rüdiger Schmitt, *The Bisitun Inscriptions of Darius the Great: Old Persian Text*, CII 1.1 (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1991); Elizabeth N. von Voigtlander, *The Bisitun Inscriptions of Darius the Great: Babylonian Version*, CII 1/2 (London: Humphries, 1978); Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 141–57.

[89] *ANET*, 315–16; *COS* 2.124:314–16; *ANEHST*, 428–29.

[90] For a few examples, see Strommenger, *Five Thousand Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*; Wu Xin, "Enemies of Empire: A Historical Reconstruction of Political Conflicts between Central Asia and the Persian Empire," in *The World of Achaemenid Persia: History, Art and Society in Iran and the Ancient Near East*, ed. John Curtis and St. John Simpson (London: Tauris, 2010), 545–64.

[91] On the history of Persia, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:647–701; Briant,

1.4.6. West Semitic

The West Semitic world for this book will be defined by the nations that mostly speak West Semitic languages (such as Aramaic, Hebrew, Ugaritic, and Moabite), though they also produced many texts in Akkadian to communicate with others. These nations occupied the area approximately between the other areas occupied by Egypt, Mesopotamia, and the Hittites. Throughout its history the area was occupied by a multiplicity of smaller kingdoms that fought each other and suffered under the interference of greater empires.[93]

From Cyrus to Alexander; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 554–70; Mieroop, *History of the Ancient Near East*, 308–45.

[92] For a study of his tactics in putting down these rebellions, see T. Cuyler Young Jr., "Darius I, Commander-In-Chief: Bisitun I:35 to III:92 as Military History," in *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea: Studies on the History of Assyria and Babylonia in Honour of A. K. Grayson*, ed. Grant Frame, PIHANS 101 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2004), 277–88.

[93] For more on the history of this area, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 1:283–331; 2:385–472; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 325–46, 401–57; Mieroop, *History of the Ancient Near East*, 174–81, 232–45; for general surveys of warfare in this area (usually focused on Israel), see J. Nougayrol, "Guerre et paix a Ugarit," *Iraq* 25 (1963): 110–23; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*; Patrick D. Miller Jr., *The Divine Warrior in Early Israel*, HSM 5 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); Millard C. Lind, *Yahweh Is a Warrior: The Theology of Warfare in Ancient Israel*, Christian Peace Shelf (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1980); Sa-Moon Kang, *Divine War in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East*, BZAW 177 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989); Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, trans. Marva J. Dawn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991); Charles Sherlock, *The God Who Fights: The War Tradition in Holy Scripture*, Rutherford Studies in Contemporary Theology 6 (Lewiston, NY: Mellen, 1993); Susan

The second millennium witnesses are not numerous, but several places provide us with archives. The most prominent among these are the finds from Ugarit in the last half of the second millennium. Ugarit appears in the historical record as an independent city friendly to Egypt, but it became a Hittite vassal kingdom before it was destroyed around 1200. The Ugaritic myths and epics are the most well-known texts from the area in this time period and refer frequently to warfare.[94] Many examples of rituals and letters have also been found there.[95] The Amarna letters, written to pharaoh by Canaanite kings, provide a glimpse into life in Canaan and Syria during the time of Akhenaten.[96]

The time around 1200 brought about massive changes in the area and the beginning of a partial dark age. Although the details are unclear, the changes seem to be related to the Sea People who attacked Egypt and might have played a role in the destruction of various other cities (such as Ugarit). After the historical records become frequent again, several groups appeared throughout the region. The Arameans dwelt in Syria based around significant cities, such as Damascus and Hamath, while Phoenician cities such as Tyre and Sidon still thrived on the coast.[97] The remnants of the Hittite Empire in Syria (especially based in Carchemish) are often referred to as the Neo-Hittite states because they continue several Hittite identification markers. In the Canaanite highlands, Judah and Israel began

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Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study in the Ethics of Violence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Eckart Otto, *Krieg and Frieden in der Hebraischen Bibel and im Alten Orient: Aspekte für eine Friedensordnung in der Moderne*, Theologie und Frieden 18 (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1999); Graham Philip, “Weapons and Warfare in Ancient Syria-Palestine,” in *Near Eastern Archaeology: A Reader*, ed. Suzanne Richard (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 184–92; Richard A. Gabriel, *The Military History of Ancient Israel* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2003); Boyd Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament: The Organization, Weapons, and Tactics of Ancient Near Eastern Armies* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2013).

[94] *ANET*, 129–55; *COS* 1.86–87:241–83, 1.102–103:333–56; Simon B. Parker, ed., *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, WAW 9 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

[95] Rituals: Dennis Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, WAW 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002). Letters: *COS* 3.45:87–115.

[96] *ANET*, 483–90; *COS* 3.92:237–42; *ANEHST*, 186–210; Moran, *Amarna Letters*; Rainey, *El-Amarna Correspondence*.

[97] For a recent history of these Aramean groups, see K. Lawson Younger Jr., *A Political History of the Arameans: From Their Origins to the End of Their Polities*, ABS 13 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016).

to appear in the historical records outside of the Bible (one of the earliest reference is in the Merenptah Stela in 1209).

The Old Testament recounts the Israelite exodus from Egypt, their entrance into the land of Canaan, and the time of the judges before the monarchy, but due to the contentious debate about the historicity of these accounts, this book will focus on the time of the divided monarchy.[98] Across the Jordan River, several other smaller kingdoms appeared, including Edom, Moab, and Ammon. As Assyria expanded its power to the west, many of these kingdoms, beginning with those in Syria, became vassal kingdoms of Assyria and eventually Assyrian provinces. This process continued even further to the west under Babylon and Persia.

Two important collections of material from these West Semitic kingdoms are *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften* (*KAI*) by H. Donner and W. Röllig and *Syrian Semitic Inscriptions* (*SSI*) by John Gibson.[99] Some material exists from other kingdoms around Israel (i.e., Ammon, Edom), but the most important for learning about warfare are those texts from Moab, especially the Mesha inscription.[100] Further to the north, many texts in Aramaic and Phoenician have been recovered from the Aramean kings, such as Zakkur, Azatiwada, Kulamuwa, and Bar-Rakib.[101] The mysterious treaty between the unknown KTK and Arpad also dates to this time.[102] Finally, the texts of the Neo-Hittite states (especially Carchemish) will be included in this section for geographical reasons.[103]

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[98] Research on warfare in the Old Testament is voluminous, for a recent survey see Charlie Trimm, “Recent Research on Warfare in the Old Testament,” *CBR* 10 (2012): 171–216; for a study of warfare during the divided monarchy, see Brad E. Kelle, *Ancient Israel at War 853–586 BC*, Essential Histories 67 (Oxford: Osprey, 2007).

[99] Herbert Donner and Wolfgang Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1966–69); John C. L. Gibson, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1971–1982); the three volumes are divided by language: Hebrew and Moabite, Aramaic, and Phoenician.

[100] *ANET*, 320–21; *COS* 2.23:137–39; *ANEHST*, 311–16; Shmuel Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past: Hebrew and Cognate Inscriptions from the Biblical Period*, Carta Handbook (Jerusalem: Carta, 2008), 387–431.

[101] *ANET*, 653–56; *COS* 2.29–40:146–62; *ANEHST*, 305–11.

[102] *ANET*, 659–61; *COS* 2.82:213–18; Chavalas, *Ancient Near East*, 299–305.

[103] Annick Payne, *Iron Age Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions*, WAW 29 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012); Trevor Bryce, *The World of the Neo-Hittite Kingdoms: A Political and Military History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).

1.4.7. Chinese

The ancient Chinese empires are geographically distant from the ancient Near East, but the warfare practiced there was remarkably similar in many ways to that described in this book. I will not be providing a separate section for Chinese warfare, but epigraphs from several of the major ancient Chinese works on military practice will be included throughout the book to illustrate some of these parallels. Since the Chinese wrote books that reflected more consciously on military practice than the inhabitants of the ancient Near East, these quotations might help to clarify some of the martial practices and ideas and encourage further interdisciplinary study.

The most well known ancient Chinese work is Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* (the translation by Samuel Griffith will be quoted here).[104] Although the work has been attributed to Sun Tzu, a Chinese general during the Spring and Autumn period (around 500 BCE), others have doubted whether the entire book actually originates with him (it appears that at least portions of the book were added at a later date).[105] Along with this famous work, several other martial works from ancient China have been translated into English by Ralph D. Sawyer and Mei-chün Sawyer in *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*.[106] T'ai Kung's *Six Secret Teachings* claims to be from the eleventh century BCE, representing T'ai Kung's advice to the kings Wen and Wu during the Chou dynasty. However, although an original version might date from that time period, our present copy appears to be from as late as the fourth century BCE during the Warring States period.[107] The book is wide-ranging in scope, dealing with topics from tactics to strategy and broader concerns of politics. *The Three Strategies of Huang Shih-Kung* is also associated with T'ai Kung, but its origins are murky (our present copy appears to date from around the first century BCE).

Likewise, the origin of *The Methods of Ssu-Ma* is probably found in the early Chou dynasty (eleventh century BCE), but much has been added and lost over the years so that the version we have today (once again from the time of the Warring States in the fourth century BCE) is considerably different. The final product is rather disjointed but focuses primarily on training and discipline rather than tactics. Wu Tzu was a famous general around 400 BCE who wrote a treatise on warfare that was then expanded by his followers. Wei Liao-Tzu was another author from the Warring States period (around 400 BCE); little is known about him historically. The work deals mainly with strategy and politics rather than tactics.

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[104] Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963).

[105] Ibid., 1–19; Ralph D. Sawyer and Mei-chün Sawyer, *The Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*, History and Warfare (Boulder: Westview, 1993), 149–56.

[106] Sawyer and Sawyer, *Seven Military Classics of Ancient China*.

[107] Ibid., 23–39.

2

Casus Belli

The natural place to begin studying war is addressing the multitude of reasons why nations go to war. The sheer number of different *casus belli* ("a cause for war") makes it difficult to categorize them, but this chapter will group them into three overarching categories: defense, protection against chaos, and acquisition. Although these three groups could be expanded into many more groups, these three groups streamline the presentation by combining similar *casus belli*.[1] The chapter will close with a brief look at times when nations sought to avoid war.

2.1. Defense

> The army cannot be mobilized out of personal anger.
>
> —Wei Liao-Tzu

One of the clearest causes for war is self-defense, a common reason given for war in the ancient Near East. Going to the defense of an ally who has been attacked will also be included in this section (technically called *casus foederis*, "case for the alliance").

2.1.1. Egyptian

Even though Egypt was relatively isolated, at various points in their history they were required to defend their borders.[2] Seti I defeated a group of Libyans who "were violating his borders."[3] In a relief of Ramesses II from Beit El-Wali depicting him chasing fleeing Nubians, an inscription above the pharaoh says that the king was "putting an end to the violating of his boundaries."[4] One of the more well-known defensive battles by the Egyptians was the attack of the Sea People during the reign of Ramesses III.[5] Ramesses IX, near the end of the Twentieth Dynasty, recorded that he defended Egypt against Shasu-bedouin who "came to attack the land of Egypt."[6] The reliefs of Sheshonq I in the Bubastite Portal at Karnak include a speech by Amun in which he says that he had "burned for you [all] foreign lands who were ignorant of Egypt and who had fallen into the practice of attacking [your] boundaries."[7] However, several times in Egyptian history they were defeated by invaders; one of the most prominent of these defeats was at the hands of the Hyksos at the beginning of the Second Intermediate period (Ahmose I later expelled the Hyksos and began the New Kingdom). Later, they were conquered by the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians.

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[1] Bustanay Oded lists twelve justifications for war by the Assyrians; see Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*.

[2] For a survey of various reasons recorded by the Egyptians about why they went to war, see Brett H. Heagren, "The Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt: An Analysis of

The Egyptians also went to war to help their allies. During the Amarna period the Canaanite kings incessantly asked Akhenaten for troops to help them fight their enemies. In some cases, especially with the northern Canaanite kings, the enemy was the Hittites encroaching on territory that the Egyptians had claimed (EA 174). However, often their enemies were other local Canaanite kings. Rib-Hadda of Gubla requested troops from the pharaoh to fight Abdi-Ashirta, whom he accused of gathering the nomadic and dangerous Hapiru. In order to persuade the pharaoh that he should help, he described the land being taken as "the land of the king" (EA 71). In another letter he warned that if no help was received the Hapiru would take all the land and the peasantry would strike down Rib-Hadda (EA 77).

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the Tactical, Logistic, and Operational Capabilities of the Egyptian Army (Dynasties XVII–XX)" (PhD diss., University of Auckland, 2010), 401–19.

[3] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, 96.

[4] Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, 11.

[5] *COS* 4.2:11–14; "First Libyan War: Great Inscription Year 5," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.4:22.

[6] A. J. Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*, DMA 3 (Jonsered: Åströms, 1994), 75.

[7] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 202; also *COS* 4.3:15.

In several events reported in the Old Testament, the Egyptians were called on to help in a defensive battle. One story recounts how YHWH deceived the Arameans through a noise that they thought was the Egyptians who had been hired by the king of Israel (2 Kgs 7:6). Egypt came to assist Judah when Sennacherib attacked (2 Kgs 19). At the end of the Assyrian Empire, Neco traveled north through Canaan to help Assyria in their battle against Babylon (2 Kgs 23:29).

2.1.2. Hittite

In contrast to the Egyptians, the Hittites were isolated and were repräsentieren frequently attacked by their neighbors whenever they sensed the Hittites growing weaker, especially at the death of a king. When Suppiluliuma and his son Arnuwanda II died in rapid succession, Mursili II rose to the throne and immediately faced battle.

> When the enemy lands heard that my brother Arnuwanda was sick, the enemy lands began hostilities. And when my brother Arnuwanda became a god, those enemy lands which had not yet begun hostilities, they too began hostilities. The enemy foreign lands said as follows: "His father, who was king of Ḫatti, was a heroic king. He kept the enemy lands defeated and he has become a god. His son who sat on his father's throne was also in the prime of life, and he got sick and he also became a god. Now, the one who has sat down on his father's throne is a child. He will not (be able to) save the borders of Ḫatti and Ḫatti itself."[8]

The primary danger of invasion for the Hittites was the Kaska to the north. Since they lacked a centralized government or king, the Hittites were never able to definitively defeat them. On one occasion, they conquered the capital of Hatti itself while the Hittites were away defeating other nations.[9] An example of this danger comes from a letter that Adad-beli wrote to inform a Hittite king that the Kaska tribes had entered Hittite territory in two places, but then disappeared. He requested more troops and informed the king that he has sent long-distance scouts to find them.[10] In another letter, a subordinate passed along a message of Nerikkaili to the king that an enemy (the Kaska?) had invaded with seven thousand troops. Nerikkaili complained that the Kaska who usually helped him in battle did not come this time, and he requested more troops to come help him. The letter also cites the enemy's concern that the Hittites would build a fortress and block their access to the area.[11]

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[8] *COS* 2.16:84 (*CTH* 61.I.A); also *ANEHST*, 254.

[9] Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 146.

[10] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 174–75 (*CTH* 188); as Hoffner notes, it is also possible that these tribes were not offering a military threat, but were finding a place to graze their animals.

Another danger earlier in Hittite history was the Hurrians to the east. Hattusili I recounted that while he was attacking Arzawa in the west, the Hurrians attacked from the east and left the Hittite king only with Hattusa.[12] As a nation with many vassal kings, the Hittites also fought on behalf of their allies. In the historical introduction to a treaty between Suppiluliuma I of Hatti and Niqmaddu II of Ugarit, the Hittite king recounts how he answered the Ugaritic king's call for help when he was attacked.[13]

2.1.3. Early Mesopotamia

The idea of defense as a cause for war was clearly a very early idea in Mesopotamia. E-anatum of Lagash said that he went to war against Gisha (Umma) when "[the leader of Giša (Umma) acted arrogantly with him] and defied Lagash regarding its (Lagash's) own property."[14] In an Early Dynastic letter, Lu-enna described his battle with the Elamites and the cause for that battle. "600 Elamites carried off (plundered) goods from Lagash toward Elam. Lu-enna, the temple administrator of (the goddess) Ninmar did battle in [x] and defeated the Elamites. He [captured/killed] 540 Elamites."[15]

The Mari texts are full of references to defending allies (see, e.g., A.3757 = LAPO 17 603).[16] However, allies could not always be relied on to help.

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[11] Ibid., 177 (ABoT 60; *CTH* 200).

[12] *ANEHST*, 220 (*CTH* 4.II.A).

[13] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 34–35 (*CTH* 46); also *TLC* 1:461; see a similar example from the same king (this time rescuing Nuhassi) in Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 54–55 (*CTH* 53).

[14] RIME 1:129, E1.9.3.1, iii.16–22; the reconstruction is based on an earlier repetition of the expression. For more on defense as a cause for war in pre-Sargonic Mesopotamia, see Amnon Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts of International Law: The Ancient Near East (2500–330 BCE)*, Legal History Library 8.4 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 7–11.

[15] Michalowski, *Letters from Early Mesopotamia*, 12 (*CIRPL* 46).

[16] Jack M. Sasson, "*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives," in *Krieg und Frieden im*

Shamshi-Adad's son Yasmah-Adad married the daughter of Ishi-Adad to conclude a treaty between the two kings. When Ishi-Adad was attacked, he requested that Shamshi-Adad come to help him. Unfortunately for him, Shamshi-Adad wrote to his son to tell Ishi-Adad that he would come only after "this ambition" was fulfilled, which most likely referred to the attack of Shamshi-Adad and Dadusha against Qabra. This letter illustrates that even when a treaty was made, allies could not always be depended upon to come to help.[17] In particular, vassals could not count on their suzerains to protect them. Ibal-Adad complained to an ambassador of Zimri-Lim about how many other rulers had followed Zimri-Lim but had lost their position when they were not protected by the king.[18]

2.1.4. Assyrian

The Assyrians faced a variety of attacks during their time as an empire, both against them and their allies.[19] One troublesome area for them was their northern border, especially the portion shared with Urartu.[20] In one letter, a frontier official (Nashir-Bel) reported to Sargon II about the complaint he issued to the Urartians over their aggressive behavior. The Urartian governor responded to the Assyrian with a similar charge of attacking forts during a time of peace (SAA 5.02). The west also saw many attacks on Assyrian power. At the farthest reaches of the Assyrian Empire, in their short-lived occupation of Egypt, Assurbanipal went to war against Egypt because the men appointed there by his father had

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Alten Vorderasien: 52e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale International Congress of Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology Münster, 17.–21. Juli 2006, ed. Hans Neumann et al., RAI 52; AOAT 401 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 675–78; Philippi Abrahami, "Les obligations militaires entre alliés d'après le témoignage des archives de Mari de l'époque paléoo-babylonienne (ca 1810–1761 av. J.-C.)," in *Droit international: Aspects politiques; Mutations et recompositions de l'espace méditerranéen*, ed. Jacques Bouineau (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014), 43–70.

[17] Sasson 3.2.c.iii; *ANEHST*, 114–15 (ARM 1.24+ = LAPO 16.330).

[18] Sasson 1.5.b.i (A.3194); also Sasson, "*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives," 679–80.

[19] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 45–68.

[20] For a study of the conflict in the northern boundary area of Assyria, see Bradley J. Parker, *The Mechanics of Empire: The Northern Frontier of Assyria as a Case Study in Imperial Dynamics* (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001).

been defeated in battle.[21] In the Old Testament, Ahaz called for help from Tiglath-pileser III to defeat his enemies (2 Kgs 16:5–9).

Babylon to the south also provided difficulties for the Assyrians, especially when Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II) seized power there. The area was important to protect the Assyrian's flank as they conquered Babylon in 710 and forced Merodach-baladan to flee. The men of Tubliash (a city near Babylon) wrote to Sargon II that they would need help if they were to secure the region, reporting that Fort Shama'unu was abandoned and only two hundred soldiers were there with no food except for their travel provisions. "It may not be postponed until later! May the army reach us quickly, so that I can give the whole country back to the king, my lord! The king, my lord, should not say: 'You wrote me once, and I sent you troops: what did you give me [as compensation]?'"[22]

2.1.5. Later Empires

Kurigalzu II, a king of Babylon in the fourteenth century, fought against an alliance of mountain dwellers that had attacked a temple in Nippur. Because he attributed the victory to Ninurta, he dedicated a sword to the deity and placed this inscription on it.

> Against Ninurta, the lord imbued with fierce dread, who lays flat the enemy, a Deluge that does not tire, a certain somebody mobilized a wicked foe in the mountains, who had no name and held no gods precious, and took troops from Dēr to be his allies, and sent (them), and had (them) draw blades in the courtyard of E-sang-dingirene, and spilled like water the blood of Nippur's citizens. In order to avenge the citizens of Nippur, the great lord Ninurta immediately allowed him no pardon but spilled his life-(blood) like water.[23]

Ninurta-kudurri-usur, a governor of the land of Suhu in the eighth century, defended the land of Laqu when a group of Arameans attacked it.

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[21] *ARAB* 2:292–93, §770; *COS* 4.41:184; *ANEHST*, 363–64; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 212; Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 176.

[22] SAA 17:152.

[23] A. R. George, "Other Second-Millennium Royal and Commemorative Inscriptions," in *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions and Related Texts in the Schøyen Collection*, ed. A. R. George, CUSAS 17 (Bethesda: CDL, 2011), 117–18.

> Trusting in their (own) forces, they proceeded on the land of Laqû (and) seized one hundred villages of the land of Laqû. They took countless booty and turned the land of Laqû into a heap of ruins. Adad-daʾʾānu, the governor of the land of Laqû, came before me with four chariots (and) two hundred soldiers. He kissed the ground before me and then implored me (for aid). I accepted his supplication.[24]

The paucity of Babylonian sources does not permit us to see many examples of the Babylonians being attacked (other than their eventual defeat at the hands of the Medes and the Persians). One of the Babylonian chronicles refers to a king of Babylon in the eighth century, Eriba-Marduk, fighting the Arameans who had stolen land from the Babylonians during a time of anarchy.

> Eriba-Marduk, son of Marduk-shakin-shumi, took the hand of Bel and the son of Bel in (his) second year. He slew with the sword the Arameans who had taken by murder and insurrection the fields of the inhabitants of Babylon and Borsippa and brought about their defeat. He took the fields and orchards away from them and gave (them) to the Babylonians and Borsippeans.[25]

Likewise, the Persians did not face a great number of assaults initially. When Darius became king of Persia, many people groups rebelled against his rule and he went to war to crush these rebellions.[26] The most famous attack on the Persian Empire was that of Alexander the Great, who eventually conquered the Persians.

2.1.6. West Semitic

Since the West Semitic kingdoms were usually geographically restricted, defense of their own land or an ally was the most common cause for war. In the eighteenth century, the vassal Aja-abum asked Till-Abnu, the king of Leilan, to send him more troops to defend his town.[27] As noted above, many of the Canaanites kings who wrote the Amarna letters describe battles defending themselves from other Canaanite kings. This example from Ayyab of Ashtartu tells of the conquest of three of his cities. “Moreover, note that it is the ruler of Ḫaṣura who has taken 3 cities from me. From the time I heard and verified this, there has been waging of war against him. Truly, may the king, my lord, take cognizance, and may the king, my lord, give thought to his servant.”[28]

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[24] RIMB 2:296, S.0.1002.2, i.27–32.

[25] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 284–89; see also Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, 182–83, chron. 24.

[26] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 141–51.

[27] Eidem, *Royal Archives from Tell Leilan*, 175 (letter 102); it appears that Till-Abnu did not respond to the letter.

Help could also be requested from the imperial power to the north in the second millennium, the Hittites. A letter discovered at Ugarit records the request of a general to a king to request troops to defeat the king of Egypt, who was coming to the region (according to a prisoner who had just been interrogated). It appears that the letter was not written to the king of Ugarit (who would not have been strong enough to oppose the king of Egypt), but to the Hittite king (perhaps Suppiluliuma).[29]

> So, may the king send troops and chariots that will stand forth, may he send?… Heaven forbid that the king of Egypt should arrive quickly; then we shall not (be able to) overpower (him) by force. Heaven forbid that the king of Egypt should come forth! Should he not come forth, and it is the *pḏt*-troops that come forth, then I shall (be able to) overcome (them) by force. So, may the king assign troops and chariots, in order that [we] (can) fight against them and (will be able to) overpower (them) by force. If, now, it is the *pḏt*-troops that come, and I do not fight with them, then be it known to my lord that every year they will come out here, that every day he will keep sending (troops) against us. Hence, we must surely now get in contact with them, (just) as they start their sorties again. And if the gods permit us, then we shall smash his belly$^{?}$ In the enemy’s$^{?}$ country, and once and for all my enemies will be annihilated.[30]

Mesha, the king of Moab, described how Israel had dominated his land and how he desired to restore Moabite control of the land.[31] Zakkur, a later Aramean king, portrayed his battle against the other Aramean kings as a defensive battle (though most likely the war began with an offensive move by Zakkur).[32] Kulamuwa, a king at Samʾal, wrote that he was being oppressed by the Danunians, so he hired the Assyrians to rescue him. This brought great economic prosperity: "Now whoever had never possessed sheep, I made lord of a flock. And whoever had never possessed an ox, I made owner of a herd and owner of silver and lord of gold."[33]

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[28] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 362 (EA 364).

[29] If this dating is correct, then the threatened Egyptian attack would have come from Akhenaten against Aziru, the king of Amurru who had switched sides from the Egyptians to the Hittites; for more on the historical background to the letter, see Shlomo Izre’el and Itamar Singer, *The General’s Letter from Ugarit: A Linguistic and Historical Reevaluation of RS 20.33 (Ugaritica V, No. 20)* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1990), 122–83.

[30] Ibid., 27 (RS 20.33).

[31] *COS* 2.23:137–38.

In the Old Testament, the books of 1–2 Kings record various battles fought to defend one's land (although they were often not successful), such as Judah against Egypt (1 Kgs 14:25–28) and Israel against Ben-hadad (2 Kgs 20). Other nations were also enlisted to defend their allies, such as when the Israelite king Baasha attacked the Judean king Asa, who then bribed Ben-Hadad to break his treaty with Baasha and attack him instead (1 Kgs 15:18–20).

2.2. Protection against Chaos

> The Sage King does not take any pleasure in using the army. He mobilizes it to execute the violently perverse and punish the rebellious.
> —Three Strategies of Huang Shih-Kung 3

Although defense against aggressors is an easily understood *casus belli* today, the idea of protection against chaos is more difficult for us to grasp. Contrary to the belief of many today that each person should allow others to possess their own personal narrative without any critique, the people of the ancient Near East thought that the world should be ordered in a certain way and a change in that order brought chaos. Even if this chaos happened outside the nation's boundaries, it threatened the order of the entire world and needed to be dealt with before it spread and affected other areas. The closest modern parallel might be going to war to defend the human rights of the oppressed (even if the oppressor is their government), a topic often discussed in such areas as genocide studies.[34] Chaos commonly was quantified as practicing evil deeds, especially breaking treaties (which would potentially lead to others breaking their own treaties).

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[32] *COS* 2.35:155.

[33] *COS* 2.30:148.

[34] For an overview, see Adam Jones, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 567–609; the journal *Genocide Studies and Prevention* is dedicated to the topic.

2.2.1. Egyptian

The key term to describe order in Egypt was *maat*, which encapsulates the ideas of truth and cosmic balance and was personified by the goddess Maat. Maat included not only personal interactions and ethics (such as employing honest weights in the marketplace), but also universal order. A primary duty of the pharaoh was guarding *maat*; failure to do so would bring chaos (*isft*).[35] According to the Admonitions of Ipuwer and the Prophecies of Neferti, chaos would come when foreigners were in the land and the land lacked a king (Ipuwer 3:1; Neferti 29–38).[36] Chaos included social disorder, reflected in the poor taking advantage of the rich (Ipuwer 2:4–5; 3:1–5; 7:9–10:1; Neferti 54–57), widespread death (Ipuwer 2:6–9; 13:4–5; Neferti 40–45), and theft (Ipuwer 5:10–15; 13:5). The answer to this chaos was a king who would come and restore *maat* to Egypt, banishing chaos (Neferti 58–71). A text illustrating clearly this responsibility comes from the accession of Merenptah to the throne:

> Be joyful the entire land! Good times have come. The lord (l.p.h. = life, prosperity, and health) has ascended in all lands, and orderliness (*mty*) has gone down to its throne. The king of Upper and Lower Egypt, lord of millions of years, great in kingship just like Horus, Ba-en-Re Mery-Amun (l.p.h.), who overwhelms Egypt with festivals, the Son of Re who is more excellent than any king, Merneptah hetep-hir-maat (l.p.h.). Every truthful one (*mꜣʾt*) come and see. Truth (*mꜣʾt*) has subdued falsehood. Evil ones have been thrown [on] their faces. All the greedy are ignored. The flood arises and does not sub-side, the inundation (*ḥʿpy*) crests. The

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[35] Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Religion as the Integration of Society and Nature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 51–60; John Baines, "Ancient Egyptian Kingship: Official Forms, Rhetoric, Context," in *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the Oxford Old Testament Seminar*, ed. John Day, JSOTSup 270 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 41–46; Emily Teeter, "Maat," *OEAE* 2:319–21.

[36] "The Admonitions of Ipuwer," *AEL* 1:149–63; "The Prophecies of Neferti," *AEL* 1:139–45.

> days are extended, the night have hours, and the moon comes precisely (i.e., at the right time). The gods are satisfied and content.[37]

Chaos outside Egypt could be expressed concretely in a variety of ways. Thutmose III went to war in Canaan because the people there were fighting each other; he would bring order to this chaos by defeating them in battle.[38] He also described himself in the Gebel Barkal Stele as one who defeated evil characters.[39] Likewise, Seti I was delighted to hear that the Shasu were fighting each other, so he could fight them and bring order to them. "One came to tell His Majesty, 'The Shasu enemies are plotting sedition. Their tribal leaders are gathered in one place, standing on the foothills of Khor, and they are engaged in turmoil and uproar; one of them is (always) killing his fellow. They do not consider the laws of the palace.'"[40] When the pharaoh conquered other lands, *maat* was established. Because of his victories, Ramesses II claimed that travelers were safe in foreign lands: "Thereafter, if a man or woman went out on business to Syria, they could even reach the Hatti-land without fear haunting their minds, because of (the magnitude of) the victories of His Majesty."[41] The Merenptah Stele paints an idyllic picture of Egypt after a defeat of the Libyans. "One walks free-striding on the road, for there's no fear in people's hearts; fortresses are left to themselves, wells are open for the messengers' use. Bastioned ramparts are becalmed, sunlight only wakes the watchmen; Medjai are stretched out to sleep.… People don't ⸢lament⸣ and mourn; towns are settled once again, he who tends his crop will eat it."[42] Piye exhorted the people of Memphis to surrender because he would be kind to them if they did; only the rebels are punished. "None among them has been slain except for the rebels who blasphemed god, so that a slaughter was made among the traitors." When the people of Memphis refused to open their city to him, Piye characterized them as people who "do not place Amon in their hearts."[43]

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[37] James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt: The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 153; see also Ricardo A. Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, BEStud 1 (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), 324.

[38] *ARE* 2:178; *COS* 2.2A:8; naturally, he does not highlight how they all banded together to fight against him at Megiddo!

[39] *COS* 2.2B:14.

[40] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, 20–21; *ARE* 3:52.

[41] "The First Hittite Marriage of Ramesses II—Abridged Version," *RITA* 2.67:99.

[42] *AEL* 2:77; also "Triumph-Hymn of Merenptah, Cairo and Karnak," *RITA* 4.Merenptah.3AB:15.

2.2.2. Hittite

The idea of establishing order throughout the world was not as strong for the Hittites as other major powers. One way the theme appears in the Hittite texts was the appeal to the Storm God for a verdict between the Hittites and their enemies. Mursili II called on his enemy Uhhaziti to fight: "Let the Stormgod, my lord, decide our lawsuit."[44] The following part of the story includes the striking of Arzawa with a lightning bolt. The theme of protection against chaos also appeared through their allies (usually vassals) breaking treaty obligations. Though this was not a direct attack on the Hittites, this kind of behavior would spread chaos in the world and must be dealt with quickly. In his first year as king, Mursili II attacked a vassal who no longer provided him with troops.

> [Then] I, [My Majesty,] returned. Because the Kaška of the land of Išḫupitta had become hostile and ceased giving me troops, I, My Majesty, went to the land of Išḫupitta. I attacked the town of […]ḫumiššena. I looted it including its transplantees, cattle and sheep and brought them away to Ḫattuša, while the town I burned down. I resubjugated the Kaška of the land of Išḫupitta. They began to give me troops. All this I did in one year.[45]

When the other nations did not send back Hittite subjects to the Hittites, it was also a cause of battle since these demands were often written into the Hittite treaties. This text is from the annals of Mursili II and concerns the Kaska leader Pihhuniya.

> I, my Majesty, moved against him and sent him a messenger and wrote to him: "My subjects, that you have taken and have led down to Kaška, send back to me." But Piḫḫuniya wrote back to me as follows: "I will give nothing back to you. And if you come to me for battle, I will by no means do battle in my own land, I will come against you in your (own) country

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[43] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 485–86.

[44] *COS* 2.16:85 (*CTH* 61.I.A); see also *ANEHST*, 255; for more details on this story, see §8.2.2.

[45] *COS* 2.16:84 (*CTH* 61.I.A); see also *ANEHST*, 255.

> and in your country I will do battle with you." Since Piḫḫuniya had written back to me in this way and had not given my subjects back to me, I went out against him in battle.[46]

2.2.3. Early Mesopotamia

The idea of restraining chaos and promoting order through warfare appears occasionally in early Mesopotamia. The Sargonic kings claim that they went to war at the verdict of the gods, appealing to a courtroom metaphor that demonstrated they were bringing order to the world. "Wh[en] the god Enlil rendered a verdict for him and (Sargon) conquer[ed] Uruk."[47] Utu-hegal's account of a battle with the Gutians records such a motivation.[48] He begins by describing the Gutians as "the *fanged* serpent of the mountain, who acted with violence against the gods, who carried off the kingship of the land of Sumer to the mountain land, who fi[ll]ed the land of Sumer with wickedness, who took away the wife from the one who had a wife, who took away the child from the one who had a child, who put wickedness and evil in the land (of Sumer)."[49] He reported that his god commanded him to fight the Gutians: "the god Enlil, lord of the foreign lands, commissioned Utu-hegal, the mighty man, king of Uruk, king of the four quarters, the king whose utterance cannot be countermanded, to destroy their name."[50] Finally, he records why the gods sent him to fight the Gutians. According to Utu-hegal, the Gutians had "seized both banks of the Tigris River. In the south, in Sumer, he had blocked (water from) the fields. In the north, he had closed off the roads (and) caused tall grass to grow up along the highway(s) of the land."[51]

The introduction to the laws of Lipit-Ishtar describes the martial feats of its author to restore order and freedom. "At that time, I liberated the sons and daughters of the city of Nippur, the sons and daughters of the city of Ur, the sons and daughters of the city of Isin, the sons and daughters of the lands of Sumer and Akkad, who were subjugated [by the yoke(?)], and I restored order."[52] Sin-iddinam accused his enemies of not serving the gods well, in contrast to his own careful service of the gods.

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[46] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 41 (*CTH* 61.I.A); see also *COS* 2.16:87.

[47] RIME 2:19, E2.1.1.6, 10–16; for more on this among the Sargonic kings, see Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 28–30.

[48] For an overview of these battles, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 105–7.

[49] RIME 2:284, E2.13.6.4, 1–14.

[50] RIME 2:284, E2.13.6.4, 15–23.

[51] RIME 2:284, E2.13.6.4, 33–45.

> The Subarian does not install *qadištum* and *kumašitum* priestesses in the places of the gods—His troops grow like grass, his seed is wide-(spread). Living in tents, he who does not know of the places of the gods, Who, being mounted as if on a wild beast, does not know libation and offerings, Fate, evil, paralysis (and) illness have not approached him. There … -men are committing a sacrilege, (yet) their army is safe.[53]

Dadusha, the king of Eshnunna, wrote that he went to war at the command of his gods for the sake of removing evil from the world.

> When Anum and Enlil with a magnificent order instructed me in a lordly way to execute kingship over the universe forever and govern the totality of the peoples, (when) at the declaration of warrior Tishpak and Adad, my god, the skill of battle, that of throwing down all evil and of lifting up the head of Eshnunna, was majestically given to me.[54]

2.2.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian king viewed himself as the one who brought justice and righteousness (*kittu u mēšari*) to the world. In contrast, the enemy kings were sinners, murderers, and wicked people. War was then the means by which justice could be brought to the world, as seen in the beginning of one of Sennacherib's inscriptions:[55]

> Sennacherib, great king, strong king, king of Assyria, unrivalled king, true shepherd, favorite of the great gods, guardian of truth who loves justice, renders assistance, goes to the aid of the weak, (and) strives after good deeds, perfect man, virile warrior, foremost of all rulers, the bridle

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[52] Roth, *Law Collections*, 25; see also *TLC* 1:71.

[53] William W. Hallo, "The Royal Correspondence of Larsa: II. The Appeal to Utu," in *Zikir Šumim: Assyriological Studies Presented to F. R. Kraus on the Occasion of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. G. van Driel et al. (Leiden: Brill, 1982), 98–101.

[54] *ANEHST*, 99.

[55] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 29–38; Beate Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, SANER 6 (Göttingen: de Gruyter, 2015), 145–97.

> that controls the insubmissive, (and) the one who strikes enemies with lightning.[56]

In contrast to the righteous Sennacherib, his enemy Merodach-baladan was an “[ev]il [foe], a rebel (with) a treacherous mind, an evildoer whose villainous acts are true.”[57] Bel-ibni wrote to Assurbanipal about an enemy king, describing him as a plague. “This king of theirs was like a plague and had brought about the rebellion of all lands.”[58] Since the enemies were evil, one of the most common reasons for going to war was the command of Assur to defeat the chaos in the land.[59] This description from Esarhaddon sums up the idea of *casus belli* for the Assyrians.

> When the god Aššur, the great lord, (wanted) to reveal the glorious might of my deeds to the people, he made my kingship the most glorious and made my name great of the kings of the four quarters, made my hands carry a terrible staff to strike the enemy, (and) empowered me to loot (and) plunder (any) land (that) had committed sin, crime, (or) negligence against the god Aššur (and) to enlarge the territory of Assyria.[60]

The evil and chaos of the Assyrian enemies could be expressed concretely in a variety of ways. Since the enemy often trusted in their own strength and forgot Assur, they were spreading chaos and needed to be defeated.[61] Another cause of chaos was usurpation and rebellion among allies, which was strictly punished by the Assyrians (even though a few of the Assyrian kings were usurpers themselves).[62] As among the Hittites, breaking a treaty was also a cause for war, since it disrupted the order in the world.[63]

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[56] RINAP 3.2:293, 213, 1–3.

[57] RINAP 3.1:32, 1, 6.

[58] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 28 (*ABL* 460 = *SLA* 32).

[59] Bustenay Oded, “‘The Command of the God’ as a Reason for Going to War in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions,” in *Ah, Assyria … Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor*, ed. Mordechai Cogan and Israel Ephʿal (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1991), 223–32; Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 9–27.

[60] RINAP 4:185, 98, rev. 30–35.

[61] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 121–37. E.g., Tiglath-pileser III described a group of enemy kings as those who “[trusted] in one another’s strength” (RINAP 1:34, 9, 5′).

[62] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 69–81, 95–99.

[63] Ibid., 83–94.

More positively, war was fought for the sake of bringing peace and prosperity.[64] Generally, this is expressed in terms of bringing prosperity to the Assyrians (see the many examples in the section on plundering and prisoners in §5.2.4). However, in some cases this also included bringing prosperity to other nations. In the Rassam Cylinder Assurbanipal complained about the people of Egypt, who had rebelled against the Assyrian troops he had placed there "for their support."[65] The idea that victory in battle was the result of a divine verdict also appears in Assyrians texts.[66]

2.2.5. Later Empires

Nebuchadnezzar II conquered Lebanon because foreign nations were oppressing it: "over which a foreign enemy rules, robbing its riches; its people were scattered and taken to faraway places." As a result of his victory, he "made the land content" and "made the people of the Lebanon lie down in safe pastures, and took care that no one would disturb them. In order that no one would harm [*them*] *I set in place* an image of my everlasting kingship."[67] In another inscription he emphasized how he was seeking the good of the nations: "Into its [Babylon's] eternal shadow I assembled all the peoples for good."[68] The Babylonian kings also emphasized bringing justice to their land. Neriglissar claimed the following: "I did not allow rivals or intimidators against my kingship, I destroyed the enemy, I crushed the hostile, I curbed the disobedient. I have established justice in the land, I have constantly led the widespread people in safety."[69]

The Persians sought to bring order to the world, which meant that everyone submitted to the Persian king. Herodotus claimed that, "the Persians think that all Asia belongs to them and lives under the rule of the King in power at the time" (*Hist.* 9.116:3). In an inscription from Susa, Darius listed the many countries that Ahura Mazda had given him, and then described how he had brought order to these countries. "Much had been done wrong, that I put right; the lands were in turmoil, one smiting the other. That which I have done, all that I did by the favour of Auramazda—that the one no longer smites the other, each one is in his own place. My law—that they fear, so that the stronger does not smite nor harm the weak."[70] In an inscription on his tomb, he likewise emphasized the order he brought: "Auramazda, when he saw this earth in commotion, thereafter he bestowed it upon me, made me king; I am king. By the favour of Auramazda I put it in its proper place."[71]

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[64] Ibid., 101–20.

[65] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 177; also *ARAB* 2:294, §773; *COS* 4.41:185; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 213.

[66] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 38–41.

[67] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 270–71.

[68] David S. Vanderhooft, *The Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets*, HSM 59 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 42.

[69] Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar, Amel-Marduk, and Neriglissar*, 119.

Darius also often described his enemies as liars (DB §§52–57) and accused them of not worshiping Ahura Mazda (DB §§72, 75).[72] Darius was most likely not a crusader who sought to stop all worship of other gods, since in his case rebellion against Persia seems to be equated with rebellion against Ahura Mazda.[73] However, later Xerxes demanded that the worship of *daivas* (false gods or demonic beings?) be stopped and he destroyed their place (though this prohibition is not found in a context of warfare) (XPh §4b). Xerxes also said that, "The man who obeys that law which Auramazda has established, and (who) worship Auramazda at the proper time and in the proper ceremonial style, he both becomes happy (while) living and blessed (when) dead."[74]

2.2.6. West Semitic

Since the West Semitic world was inhabited by smaller kingdoms, preserving their own existence against attacks tended to be more important than defending against chaos. However, some wars were started by breaking treaty obligations. When the Moabites stopped sending tribute to Israel, Jehoram attacked Moab (2 Kgs 3:4–6). Most likely, Amaziah's attack on Edom in 2 Kgs 14:7 was also an attempt to put them under the control of Judah after Edom had revolted earlier during the days of Jehoram (2 Kgs 8:20–22).

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[70] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 491 (DSe §4).

[71] Ibid., 503 (DNa).

[72] Ibid., 148–50.

[73] Bruno Jacobs, "Kriegsentscheidung durch göttliche Gunst: Zur Bewertung von DBi §§ 72 und 75," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 398; see §5.6.5 for how the Persians treated the deities of those they conquered.

[74] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 305 (XPh §4d).

2.3. Acquisition

> They take booty from the enemy because they desire wealth.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 2.17

One obvious reason for going to war is to acquire wealth from the defeated enemy. Although this might be the agenda in many wars, even kings in the ancient Near East recognized that some other justification beyond greed was needed for most wars and rarely stated that they went to war simply to acquire plunder. However, acquisition was viewed as more permissible if it was given a religious tone, as many kings claimed their gods commanded them to expand their borders. While some of the commands from the deity to go to war are included in the previous section on protection from chaos, a few have been included here in this category when the chaos feature is lacking, as the divine command could serve as a justification for taking a land that had not disturbed order. Finally, acquisition was also justified by giving part of the plunder to the gods (see §5.2 for examples of this).

2.3.1. Egyptian

Going to war would have been frequently due to the desire to gain plunder, but the Egyptians rarely state this goal in such terms (though the long plunder lists from certain pharaohs implicitly emphasize acquisition).[75] In sociopolitical terms, the militarism of the New Kingdom was partly due to the presence of a developed military that had just defeated the Hyksos and needed an outlet, leading to expansion and further acquisition.[76] The rewards given to soldiers who fought well (see examples in §5.2.1) illustrate the impetus many common soldiers would have had in battle. A graffiti inscription written by a soldier on his way to Nubia (written about 180 km south of Elephantine) records this desire for plunder (dated to about 2000 BCE). "Ibes' son Id's son Ibes at(?) the estate of […] Dedukhnum: the army came [to Wawat], which I went round in year 6, [month 1(?)] of Peret. With the army I travelled downstream. There was no fighting; I shall not bring a Nubian back (as captive) from the land of the Nubians."[77]

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[75] Shaw, "Battle in Ancient Egypt," 252.

[76] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 48.

[77] R. B. Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt: An Anthology of Middle Kingdom Writings*, OSCC 9 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 95.

In view of the chaos surrounding Egypt, the motif of bringing order was expressed through divine commands to expand the border of Egypt. The other nations needed to submit to Egypt if they were not going to spread chaos through the world. A boundary stela of Sesostris III included several lines describing some of his motivation in battle: "I have made my boundary, out-southing my forefathers. I have exceeded what was handed down to me."[78] Likewise, Thutmose III attacked the Levant to "extend the boundaries of Egypt."[79] In an inscription found in Beth-Shan Amen-Re granted Ramesses II victories and whatever borders he wanted.

> Words spoken by Amen-Re, Lord of heaven: "I grant to you the victories of Horus and the strength of the Son of Nut forever." Words spoken: "I grant to you your boundaries as far as you wish, to the limits of the pillars of heaven. Receive for yourself the sword against all foreign lands, and may you lop off the heads of those rebellious against you, you being Horus, Chief of the Two Lands."[80]

As recorded in an officer's stela, Ramesses II commanded the *Sek*-Officer, Ramose, serving under Setau, the Viceroy of Kush, to muster troops to plunder Libya for workers to build a temple, giving a religious motivation for acquisition of plunder.

> His Person commanded (his) confidant (?),
> the viceroy of Kush, Setau, true of voice,
> and the soldiers of the company of Ramesses Meryamun
> (called) "Amun-is-the-protector-of-(his)-son,"
> that he should plunder the land of Libya in order to build in the temple
> of "Ramesses-Meryamun-in-the-domain-of-Amun,"
> as well as commanding the *sek*-officer Ramose
> to muster from the company;
> by the *sek*-officer Ramose.[81]

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[78] Ibid., 43; also *AEL* 1:119.

[79] *ARE* 2:180; *COS* 2.2A:9.

[80] "Beth-Shan Stela, Year 18," *RITA* 2.6:28; for the possible historical background of this stela in the retreat of the Hittite king Hattusili III before Ramesses II just three years before their treaty, see *RITANC* 2:61–62.

[81] Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 211–12.

2.3.2. Hittite

The Hittite kings did not view themselves as masters of the entire world, so they did not record commands from their gods to expand their borders.[82] Presumably gaining plunder was important, but less attention is focused on it among the Hittites than in other nations.

2.3.3. Early Mesopotamian

A very honest statement of acquisition comes from the Mari texts, where Ishi-Adad wrote to Yasmah-Adad about why they should go to war together: "'Fatten' your troops with spoils (so that) they will bless you."[83] Sumu-hadu wrote in similar terms to Zimri-Lim concerning an ally that he was attempting to convince to attack a city with wealth from Shamshi-Adad. Sumu-hadu quoted his speech to the potential ally:

> Now you certainly know that the treasures of Shamshi-Adad are inside that city! Go with your lord on this campaign, along with your brothers the Simal, so that the one who does not have a slave may acquire for himself a slave, the one who does not have a female slave may acquire for himself a female slave, and the one who does not have a donkey may acquire for himself a donkey. Savor the plunder and establish the renown of your lord.[84]

Of course, someone else desiring to gain plunder was unacceptable, as seen in this statement from Rim-Anum, the king of Uruk. "King Rīm-Anum, with the help of […], defeated the country of Iamutbal, as well as(?) the armies of Eshnunna, Isin and Kazallu, which had marched against him, in order to make booty."[85] More commonly, the desire to gain wealth was put in religious terms. The idea of acquisition was early justified by the command of the god. Enshakushana, a ruler of Uruk, justifies his expansionism in this way. "When the gods commanded him, he sacked Kiš (and) captured Enbi-Ištar, the king of Kiš."[86]

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[82] Richard H. Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace with the Hittite State," in *War and Peace in the Ancient World*, ed. Kurt A. Raaflaub, AWCH (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 83.

[83] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 48 (ARM 5.16 = LAPO 17.443 = Sasson 3.2.c.vi).

[84] *COS* 4.60:243 (FM 2.116).

[85] W. F. Leemans, "The Asīru," *RA* 55 (1961): 70; David Elgavish, "The Division of the Spoils of War in the Bible and in the Ancient Near East," *ZABR* 8 (2002): 269.

2.3.4. Assyrian

The imperialism of the Assyrians was clearly predicated on acquisition, but such justification for war does not appear in the annals.[87] However, a clear statement of plundering is found in a remarkably honest query to the Sun God when Assurbanipal asked whether he should send his chief eunuch to plunder Gambulu.[88] "Should Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, strive and plan? Should he[send] Na[bû-šarru-uṣur, chief eunuch, with] men, horses, and[troop]s, as he [wishes], to the district of Gam[bulu? Should they go]to kill, lo[ot, and plunder]?" Esarhaddon recorded that Assur provided him with a staff that would allow him to "plunder (any) land (that) had committed sin, crime, (or) negligence against the god Aššur (and) to enlarge the territory of Assyria."[89]

The overarching desire for acquisition is usually framed in religious terms as the claim of Assur over the entire world and the divine command to expand the boundaries of Assyria.[90] On some occasions, the command of Assur, when it was not accompanied by any statement of evil on the part of their enemies, could be considered in this category. For example, Sennacherib attacked the land of the Kassites and the land of the Yasubigallians at the encouragement of Assur, without any provocation on the part of his new enemies except that they had never submitted to Assyrian kings.[91] Likewise, Esarhaddon attacked Bazu, a land far away, because Assur commanded him to do so, even though no provocation from them is recorded.[92] In the Old Testament, Tiglath-pileser III's conquest of parts of Israel is not connected with a rebellion, so it could be counted as a war of acquisition from the Israelite perspective (2 Kgs 15:29–30).

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[86] RIME 1:430, E1.14.17.1, 6–7; for more on acquisition in the pre-Sargonic period, see Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 15–18.

[87] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 3.

[88] SAA 4:248, no. 271.

[89] RINAP 4:185, 98, rev. 33–35.

[90] Oded, *War, Peace, and Empire*, 163–76.

[91] RINAP 3.1:173, 22, 65–67.

[92] RINAP 4:20–21, 1, iv.53–77; *COS* 4.39:177.

2.3.5. Later Empires

According to the Etemenanki inscription the Babylonian king Nabopolassar went to war against the Subareans at the command of his gods Nabu and Marduk, but no provocation is recorded.[93]

2.3.6. West Semitic

In the Old Testament, when Baasha the king of Israel attacked Asa, the king of Judah bribed Ben-Hadad to break his treaty with Baasha and attack him instead. It appears that the main incentive for Ben-Hadad was the acquisition of territory, as he conquered parts of Galilee (1 Kgs 15:18–20). Ahab requested that Jehoshaphat join him in an attack on Ramoth-Gilead, but defended his acquisition by arguing that it had formerly belonged to Israel (1 Kgs 22:3).

2.4. Avoiding War

> For to win one hundred victories in one hundred battles is not the acme of skill. To subdue the enemy without fighting is the acme of skill.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 3.3

Contrary to the impression that most ancient nations sought to cultivate, nations frequently avoided warfare. However, this was not due to ancient communities or kings seeking to cultivate peace. Fundamentally, it was usually for one of two reasons: either they were too weak to attack the other nation, or the other nations were sufficiently weaker that they surrendered rather than fighting. Although kings frequently recorded the latter case, they rarely acknowledged being too weak to attack someone.[94]

2.4.1. Egyptian

In the inscriptions of Ramesses II, the peace negotiations between the Egyptians and the Hittites at the end of the battle of Qadesh provides an opportunity to discuss the morality of war. The Hittites ask for peace in the following way:

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[93] Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar, Amel-Marduk, and Neriglissar*, 43.

[94] For an overview of peace in ancient cultures, see Kurt A. Raaflaub, "Searching for Peace in the Ancient World," in Raaflaub, *War and Peace in the Ancient World*, 1–33.

> Do not prevail over us, for behold your power is great! Your strength is heavy upon the land of Hatti. Is it good that you kill your servants, Your face savage towards them, without your pity (on them)? Behold you have spent yesterday killing hundreds of thousands. You are come today, and you have not set (any) heirs aside. Do not make your utterances hard, O strong king. Peace is more profitable than fighting, so give breath to us.[95]

The Hittites proclaimed that peace is better than war and that the killing is senseless, seeming to recognize some of the injustice done in warfare. But these sentiments are colored by the context: they have just lost the battle and no longer desire to keep fighting. The officers of Ramesses II also proclaim the greatness of peace. "Peace is very good, O Sovereign, our Lord. There is no wrong in peace when you have done it. Who shall resist you on the day of your anger?"[96] But the Egyptians also realize that Ramesses II has overcommitted and is not likely to conquer the Hittites decisively. Neither side appears to demonstrate an ideological desire for peace on the part of either side, but a pragmatic desire to avoid further defeat. However, this temporary peace and the later more permanent peace treaty with the Hittites did at the very least make the Egyptians recognize that some foreigners could be regarded as equals.[97] How can gods be witnesses to a peace treaty and then also tell the pharaoh to conquer the world?[98]

Although it was not usually acknowledged, surely at many points throughout Egyptian history they did not go to war because they were not strong enough to defeat their enemies (though discussing such motivations in a prior time was acceptable). On the other hand, the occasions when they were sufficiently powerful to cause their enemies to surrender rather than fight were noted in their literature. After a successful campaign, Amenhotep II recorded that various foreign chieftains competed with each other to bring greater gifts to the pharaoh.[99] Ramesses II boasted that all the potential rebels he met on the way to Qadesh submitted to him because of fear of his wrath.[100]

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[95] Davies, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty*, 83.

[96] Ibid; also *COS* 2.5A:38 ("The Battle of Qadesh—The Poem").

[97] Lanny Bell, "Conflict and Reconciliation in the Ancient Middle East: The Clash of Egyptian and Hittite Chariots in Syria, and the World's First Peace Treaty between 'Superpowers,'" in Raaflaub, *War and Peace in the Ancient World*, 113.

[98] B. J. Kemp, "Imperialism and Empire in New Kingdom Egypt," in *Imperialism in the Ancient World*, ed. Peter D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker, CSS (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 15–16; for the argument that this was the culmination of a drastic change in attitude toward warfare during the New Kingdom, see Jan Assmann, *The Mind of Egypt: History and Meaning in the Time of the Pharaohs*, trans. Andrew Jenkins (New York: Metropolitan, 2002), 247–71.

2.4.2. Hittite

The Hittites are often closely associated with peace. Richard Beal claims that "peace was an ideal state of affairs" for the Hittites.[101] One Hittite text refers to a "Storm God of Peace."[102] The large number of Hittite treaties illustrates the peace that the Hittites often made with their neighbors and that they preferred indirect rule when possible (at some point they had treaties with every major power in the ancient Near East).[103] The Hittites began with serious diplomacy in many situations rather than immediately going to war; in some situations they even went against their own principles to avoid war.[104] Not only did the Hittites avoid fighting, but treaties prohibited their vassals from fighting each other. In the treaty between Suppiluliuma I and Shattiwaza of Mitanni, the Hittite king prohibited Shattiwaza from attacking or conspiring with Piyassili of Carchemish.[105] Peace could also bring greater trade.[106] Suppiluliuma recorded this effect: "And because all Kaška-land was at peace, some of the Hittite people had inns behind Kaška towns, (while) some had again gone to the town."[107] The Proclamation of Anitta (*CTH* 1.A) reveals how Anitta did not injure the people of the conquered city Nesa, but treated them as mothers and fathers.[108]

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[99] *COS* 2.3:22.

[100] *COS* 2.5A:33.

[101] Richard H. Beal, "Hittite Reluctance to Go to War," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 109.

[102] Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 81.

[103] Richard H. Beal, "Hittite Reluctance to Go to War," in *Krieg und Frieden im Alten Vorderasien: 52^{e} Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale International Congress of Assyriology and Near Eastern Archaeology Münster, 17.–21. Juli 2006*, ed. Hans Neumann et al., AOAT 401 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 109–10.

[104] For many examples, see ibid.

[105] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 46 (*CTH* 51).

[106] Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 82.

[107] *COS* 1.74:189 (*CTH* 40).

However, not all scholars studying the Hittites view them the same way. Trevor Bryce argues that the Hittites lacked an ideology of peace, but desired to portray themselves as magnanimous for pragmatic reasons.[109] Gary Beckman says, "the Hittites of second-millennium Anatolia considered armed struggle with other groups and political entities to be a normal condition of human affairs."[110] Since the Hittite armies campaigned virtually every year, they often used diplomacy because the army was stretched too thin to fight on multiple fronts. Diplomacy also worked when neighbors were significantly weaker. "My father (Suppiluliuma I) sent Hannutti, the Chief of the Chariot Fighters, to the Lower Land and gave him [troops] and chariotry. When Hannutti arrived [in the Lower Land] and when the people of Lalanda [saw] him, they became afraid and made peace, [and they again became a possession of the Land of Hatti]."[111] A series of Instructions (perhaps from Tudhaliya I) even include a warning against hoping for peace. "[*Furthermore*], whoever is appeasing regarding the e[nem]y, and [even s]peaks thus: 'Maybe this war will be lost,' and he [(even s)]peaks thus 'I hope that this [*wa*]*r* does [not(t e)]scalate!' [Then] let these oath deities grab him, and let them destroy [him along with his wife] and his sons!"[112]

2.4.3. Early Mesopotamian

Early Mesopotamia might represent the closest one gets to a critique of warfare in the ancient Near East. Benjamin Foster argues that the Sumerians "thought that peace and harmony were a natural and original condition of the human race, rather than the result of human management."[113]

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[108] *COS* 1.72:182.

[109] Trevor Bryce, *Life and Society in the Hittite World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 99–100.

[110] Gary Beckman, "The Hittites Make Peace," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 117.

[111] Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 82; see also Philo H. J. Houwink ten Cate, "A New Fragment of the 'Deeds of Suppiluliuma as Told by His Son, Mursili II,'" *JNES* 25 (1966): 28.

[112] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 172–73 (*CTH* 251).

[113] Benjamin R. Foster, "Water under the Straw: Peace in Mesopotamia," in Raaflaub, *War and Peace in the Ancient World*, 71.

The gods of peace are mentioned sometimes in Sumerian literature, while Gudea (a king of Lagash in the third millennium) represented himself as nonmartial.[114] The Standard of Ur is well known for having a "peace" side depicting a banquet, though it might be the celebration of a military victory (fig. 2.1).[115] A poem praising Shulgi asserts that he did not want to commit violence against another king.

> I have no equal among even the most distant rulers, and I can also state that my deeds are great deeds. Everything is achievable by me, the king. Since the time when Enlil gave me the direction of his numerous people in view of my wisdom, my extraordinary power and my justice, in view of my resolute and unforgettable words, and in view of my expertise, comparable to that of Ištaran, in verdicts, my heart has never committed violence against even one other king, be he an Akkadian or a son of Sumer, or even a brute from Gutium.[116]

The Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sin presents a strong case for following omens; as part of the argument it appears to condemn offensive war.[117] In the legend, Naram-Sin describes how he went to war even when the great gods instructed him not to; his entire army is destroyed on multiple occasions. The Neo-Assyrian version ends with the following lines.

> Strengthen your walls! Fill your moats with water! Your chests, your grain, your money, your goods, your possessions, bring into your stronghold! Tie up your weapons and put (them) into the corners! Guard your courage! Take heed of your own person! Let him roam through your land! Go not out to him! Let him scatter the cattle! Do not go near him! Let him consume the flesh of your offspring! Let him murder, (and) let him return (unharmed)! (But) you be self-controlled, disciplined. Answer them, "Here I am, sir"! Requite their wickedness with kindness! And (their) kindness with gifts and supplementary presents(?)!

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[114] For gods of peace, see Julia M. Asher-Greve, "Insinuations of Peace in Literature, the Standard of Ur, and the Stele of Vultures," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 30–31. For Gudea, see Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 240.

[115] Asher-Greve, "Insinuations of Peace," 31–32.

[116] Šulgi B, ETCSL 2.4.2.0.2:259–269; cited in Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 212.

[117] Foster, "Water under the Straw," 73; for the text, see Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 263–368; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 344–56. Copies of this legend are extant from the Old Babylon period, the Middle Babylonian period (in Hattusa), and the Neo-Assyrian period.

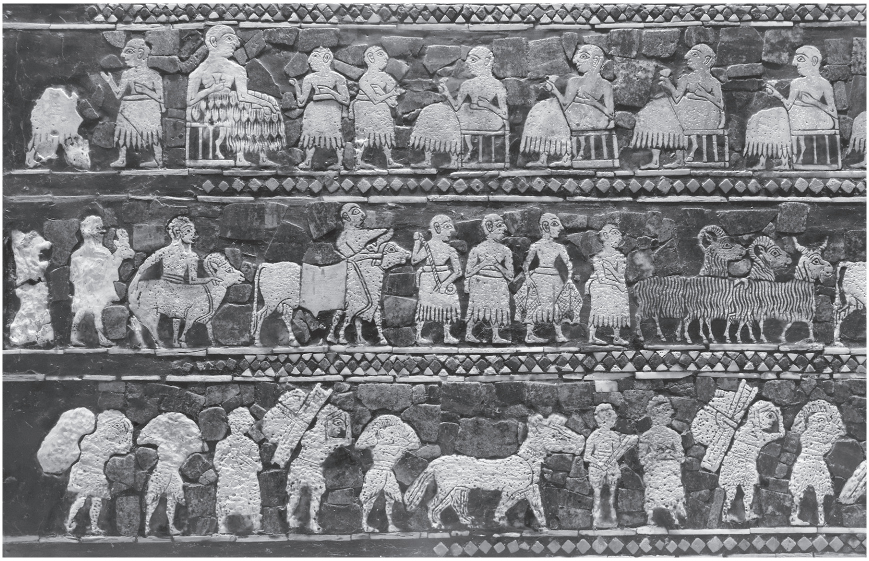

Fig. 2.1. Peace side of Standard of Ur. British Museum 121201. Photo courtesy of Marie-Lan Nguyen, Wikimedia Commons.

> Always precede them (i.e., do more than they ask)! Wise scribes, let them declaim your inscription. You who have read my inscription and thus have gotten yourself out (of trouble), you who have blessed me, may a future (ruler) Bless you![118]

The Epic of Erra also speaks negatively of violence and warfare. The long poem describes the numerous violent acts of the god Erra, many of which appear random. The violence has even affected Babylon, causing its patron deity Marduk to mourn for the city.[119] The myth Atrahasis exhibits the foolishness of violence. When the humans make too much noise for Enlil, he decides to destroy them all. Forgetting how important the humans were to the gods, he only remembers when Enki endeavored to save Atrahasis from the plagues and the flood.[120]

The benefits of trade also played a significant role in avoiding warfare. The Sumerian Epic of Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta records the account of two nations fighting, but who resolved their differences through the counsel of an old woman who suggests that both would become richer if they engaged in trade rather than warfare.[121] The merchants often desired peace as it granted them greater freedom for trade; one example comes from the Assyrians who traded in Anatolia in the first few centuries of the second millennium.[122]

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[118] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 329–31.

[119] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 903; Foster, "Water under the Straw," 73–75.

[120] Foster, "Water under the Straw," 75.

Shamshi-Adad once praised his son, who had just captured a city (Till-abnum), for not killing the inhabitants but releasing them. The point of this was to spread the knowledge that the people of Shamshi-Adad would not pillage when they captured the land, causing the people there to follow him (ARM 1.10 = LAPO 17.475 = Sasson 3.4.b.vii.note). A letter from Nahimum to Ashqudum, a top advisor to Zimri-Lim, refers to the problems that war created.

> Is it fair that all of you have set your mind to be unjust? That upon news of peace you plan to despoil your colleagues, (thinking) "Peace is distant, and we must be constantly concerned about war." Don't you know that when hostilities break out, they will never go away, the future becoming worse than the past? Indeed, because of these conditions, will not evil rather than decent people have reason to gloat?[123]

One form of peace was a peace treaty, of which many are known from early Mesopotamia.[124] Although these peace treaties were more pragmatic than ideological, in some cases, peace treaties could at least temporarily prevent war from occurring.[125] In one siege situation, Yasim-El refused to attack Hammurabi because his lord had not told him to fight (ARM 26.405). However, a peace treaty was also not a guarantee of peace. A letter from Ishme-Dagan to his brother describes the deceitful actions of the Turukku-tribesmen, who had a peace treaty with the village of Talzuru, but attacked them anyway and killed every male in the village (ARM 4.24 = LAPO 17.506 = Sasson 3.2.c.ix).

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[121] Ibid., 75–76; for the text, see ETCSL 1.8.2.3; Jacobsen, *Harps That Once*, 275–319.

[122] Klaas R. Veenhof, "Old Assyrian Traders in War and Peace," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 837–49.

[123] Sasson, "*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives," 686 (ARM 26.39 = Sasson 3.1.b).

[124] For a recent collection of these treaties from throughout the ancient Near East, see Kitchen and Lawrence, *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East*.

[125] Foster, "Water under the Straw," 67–70; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 213–14.

2.4.4. Assyrian

Although the Assyrians are famous for their military power, a close study of the Assyrian letters reveals that they usually preferred to reach their goals without fighting.[126] Part of the reason for their terrible treatment of defeated enemies (see §5.3.4 for examples) was to convince others that it would be better for them to surrender than to fight. A letter from Sargon II to Assur-sharru-usur illustrates their desire that enemies surrender rather fight: "Without a battle [or any]thing, the Phrygian has given us his word and become our ally!" (SAA 1.01). Because of this development, the king instructed him to "write to him in friendly terms," a motif that appears throughout Assyrian letters (especially in the eighth century).[127] A letter from Assurbanipal (when he was the crown prince) describes a peace treaty between Elam and Assyria in these terms: "The king of Elam and the king of Assyria, having repeatedly consulted with one another, have made mutual peace (*isselmū*) by the command of the god Marduk, and they have (thus) become treaty partners (*bēl adê ša ahamiš*)."[128] Another clear example of the preference of peace (victory through surrender rather than fighting) comes from the Old Testament, in which the Assyrian leaders call on the Judeans to surrender rather than fight (2 Kgs 18:19–35).

2.4.5. Later Empires

In contrast to the Assyrians, the Babylonians strenuously avoided including martial events in their annals. Although this might appear to favor peaceful relations, other historical accounts reveal that they were just as imperialistic as the Assyrians. They appear to be reacting against the literature of the Assyrians rather than their actions.[129] The Persians likewise also avoided discussing warfare often in their inscriptions (with the exception of the Bisitun Inscription). They continued to expand their empire, but they do not appear to have been quite as cruel as the Assyrians. The primary example of this is the kind treatment of captive groups that were allowed to return home rather than being kept in captivity, as exemplified in the biblical account of the return of the Jews under Ezra and Nehemiah and the restoration of Babylon when Cyrus conquered it.[130]

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[126] Frederick Mario Fales, "On *Pax Assyriaca* in the Eighth–Seventh Centuries BCE and Its Implications," in *Isaiah's Vision of Peace in Biblical and Modern International Relations: Swords into Plowshares*, ed. Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook, CRIR (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 17–36.

[127] Frederick Mario Fales, "'To Speak Kindly to Him/Them' as Item of Assyrian Political Discourse," in *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*, ed. Mikko Luukko, Saana Svärd, and Raija Mattila, StOr 106 (Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 2009), 27–40.

[128] CT 54 580 in Fales, "On *Pax Assyriaca*," 18.

[129] David S. Vanderhooft, "Babylonian Strategies of Imperial Control in the West: Royal Practice and Rhetoric," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian*

However, others have contended that the Persians did not avoid warfare any more than the previous empires. Pierre Briant argues that we should not highlight the lack of war reliefs and texts, as the Persian reliefs glorify the great empire of the king and implicitly accept the legitimacy of the warfare that gained the empire.[131] In regard to the large number of people depicted in the texts and reliefs, "the accent is placed more on political subjugation and imposition of tribute than on collaboration."[132] A text from Darius emphasized the connection between military power and the extent of the empire when he listed the countries that he had seized.[133] The kind treatment recorded in the Cyrus Cylinder and Ezra and Nehemiah might have been localized actions for pragmatic reasons rather than reflections of an ideology of peace.[134] They also employed their military might to encourage others to surrender, such as when the Libyans surrendered without a fight to Cambyses after he defeated Egypt (Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.13).

2.4.6. West Semitic

Due to their small size, these nations often avoided war because they knew that they would be defeated. Many became vassals to the military power of the time, such as Egypt or Hatti in the second millennium and Assyria or Babylon in the first millennium. Bar-Rakib, a king of Samʾal, boasted in

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Period, ed. Oded Lipschits and Joseph Blenkinsopp (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 248–50.

[130] Josef Wiesehöfer, "From Archaemenid Imperial Order to Sasanian Diplomacy: War, Peace, and Reconcilation in Pre-Islamic Iran," in Raaflaub, *War and Peace in the Ancient World*, 121–40.

[131] Briant, "Achaemenid Empire," 105–7; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 172–79.

[132] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 178.

[133] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 502–3 (DNa).

[134] For more on this debate, see §5.6.5.

an inscription that he was a servant of the Assyrian Tiglath-pileser III and that he "ran at the wheel of my lord, the king of Assyria."[135] Even though Rehoboam raised a very large army to fight the rebellious northern tribes, YHWH commanded him not to fight them because YHWH had ordained the rebellion (1 Kgs 12:21–24). When Elisha led the blinded Arameans into the city of Samaria where the Israelites captured them, Israel fed them a feast and sent them home (2 Kgs 6:18–23).

Many scholars have argued that at least portions of the Old Testament have advocated peace as a general rule.[136] The book of Chronicles seems to present a view of war in which YHWH fights for the Israelites, who are then responsible for following YHWH (2 Chr 20 is the parade example) but not for fighting.[137] In a recent article Gianni Barbiero sees a similarly nonviolent messiah in Ps 110.[138] Likewise, many have seen the prophets as foundational texts for peace and the rejection of militarism.[139] Some scholars have even extended this argument to the entire Old Testament, viewing it as a fundamentally peaceful text that calls for its readers to act in nonviolent ways.[140]

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[135] *COS* 2.38:161.

[136] For a survey, see Trimm, "Recent Research on Warfare," 20–22.

[137] Pancratius C. Beentjes, "War Narratives in the Book of Chronicles," in *DCLY 2010*: 87–102; Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible*, 134–49. For a contrary view, see Gary N. Knoppers, "Jerusalem at War in Chronicles," in *Zion, City of Our God*, ed. Richard S. Hess and Gordon J. Wenham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 55–76.

[138] Gianni Barbiero, "The Non-Violent Messiah of Psalm 110," *BZ* 58 (2014): 1–20.

[139] Eckart Otto, "Krieg und Religion im Alten Orient und im alten Israel," in *Glaubenskriege in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart: Referate, gehalten auf dem Symposium der Joachim-Jungius-Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften, Hamburg, am 28. und 29. Oktober 1994*, ed. Peter Herrmann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 37–47; David A. Leiter, "Visions of Peace in Isaiah," in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East: Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon*, ed. John Kaltner and Louis Stulman, JSOTSup 378 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 244–52; Werner Grimm, "Er nicht! Der Gottesknecht als Verweigerer des Heiligen Kriegs: Ein neues Verständnis von Jes 42,1–4," *BN* 138 (2008): 47–61; M. Daniel Carroll R., "Impulses Toward Peace in a Country at War: The Book of Isaiah between Realism and Hope," in *War in the Bible and Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Richard S. Hess and Elmer A. Martens, BBRSup 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 59–78.

[140] Lind, *Yahweh Is a Warrior*; David A. Leiter, *Neglected Voices: Peace in the Old Testament* (Scottdale, PA: Herald, 2007); Jerome F. D. Creach, *Violence in Scripture*, Interpretation (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013).

3
Preparation for War

Long before they could achieve glory in a battle, kings and generals toiled through numerous logistical complications to prepare for the battle. First, some form of communication with the enemy was undertaken (although, as will be seen, this was often not done). Second, the leaders employed a variety of intelligence techniques to learn about the location, strength, and morale of the enemy. Third, the kings filled the ranks with those native to their country through conscription or volunteerism as well as foreigners who were prisoners of war or mercenaries. Fourth, once the armies were mustered they had to be transported to the battlefield, dealing in particular with the complications of crossing difficult terrain and acquiring supplies for the troops. Fifth, the kings on campaign with the army interacted with the officers and troops by asking for counsel and speaking to the army. Sixth, the armies about to be attacked often prepared themselves by building defenses. One important part of preparing for battle not covered in this chapter is interaction with the gods before battle (such as divination to determine the will of the gods), which is included in §§8.2 and 8.3.

3.1. Communication with Enemy

How often kings warned their enemies they were on the way to attack them and whether appointed times and places were set for battle is debated. As will be more fully discussed in the section on deception in warfare (§4.8), the empires in their own documents claimed to abhor deceptive martial techniques. For example, the author of the Instructions of Merikare condemned the Asiatics because "He does not announce the day of combat."[1] Many centuries later Piye also commanded his troops to announce the day of battle beforehand.[2] Large armies would also have been forced to move slowly and give plenty of time for enemy scouts to detect their presence. If this is the case, then after deciding to go to war, one of the first expected activities would be the declaration of war. A brief survey reveals several examples of declarations of war among the various nations of the ancient Near East, and several scholars view these as real diplomatic announcements, proclaiming to the enemy that they could expect an attack soon.[3]

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[1] *AEL* 1:104, 94; also *COS* 1.35:64; *ANET*, 416.

However, other scholars have argued that these declarations of war were most likely literary fictions.[4] In practical terms, it appears rather foolish to tell the enemy when an attack is coming unless one is guaranteed that they have a much larger force and the enemy will simply surrender. Hittite treaties sometimes include the provision that vassals were not to warn an enemy of an upcoming Hittite attack.[5] As will be seen in the following chapter, even the empires sometimes employed deception to win battles. In terms of genre, most declarations of war are located in retrospective accounts, such as annals, which are designed to portray the king in a positive light and as one who “plays by the rules.” The few letters that contain a declaration of war are suspect historically and are most likely later retrospective texts.

In contrast to declarations of war, ultimatums are found throughout the ancient Near East, particularly from the greater powers to the lesser powers. An ultimatum differs from a declaration in war in that it provided means by which war can still be avoided, while a declaration of war simply informed the enemy of an upcoming battle. When sending an ultimatum the greater power calculated that the lesser power would succumb to the threat of violence, sparing any need for a fight.[6]

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[2] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 479; also *AEL* 3:69; *COS* 2.7:44.

[3] For studies that affirms the historical nature of these declarations of war, see Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 160–71; Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*.

[4] See in particular Jack M. Sasson, “Yarim Lim’s Declaration of War,” in *Miscellanea Babyloniaca: Mélanges offerts à Maurice Birot*, ed. J.-M. Durand and J.-R. Kupper (Paris: Recherche sur les civilisations, 1985), 237–55; Sasson, “*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives.”

[5] See, e.g., Mursili II’s treaty with Tuppi-Teshshup in Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 61 (*CTH* 62).

[6] For more on this theme, see §2.4; the section on humiliating the enemy in §5.3 describes more of what nations did to cause other nations to surrender rather than fight.

3.1.1. Egyptian

As noted above, Piye was careful to state that his troops were to announce the battle before fighting.[7] However, he also employed ultimatums. After he approached cities that did not serve him, Piye threatened them with death if they did not submit; this example is from Meidum (who decided to submit). “Behold, two ways are before you; choose as you wish. Open, you will live; close, you will die. My Majesty will not pass by a closed city!”[8]

3.1.2. Hittite

Hittite literature reveals a few cases of communicating with the enemy before battle.[9] A somewhat reconstructed section of the Deeds of Suppiluliuma might describe him calling his enemy Anzapahhaddu to fight, but he did not come out for battle.[10] One example of a declaration of war is found in the annals of Mursili II. “But to Uḫḫaziti I sent a messenger and wrote to him: ‘My subjects, who came to you, as I demanded them back from you, you have not given back to me. And you have also called me a child and disparaged me. So, up now! We will fight each other! And the weather-god, my Lord, shall decide the lawsuit for us!’”[11]

When Pihhuniya began to rule land near the Hittites, Mursili II demanded that he return the Hittite captives he had taken. However, Pihhuniya refused and told him that he would not fight the Hittite king on his land, but that he would advance to Hittite land to fight Mursili II. Insulted by the reply, Mursili II marched to the land of Pihhuniya and defeated him there.[12] A letter from Anum-hirbi to Warsama might be classified as an ultimatum, since a vassal of Warsama (the man of Taisama) had invaded the land of Mama. Although the letter does not include an explicit threat, presumably failure to keep the vassal in check would have resulted in increased tensions and perhaps hostility.

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[7] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 479.

[8] Ibid., 484.

[9] For a survey of the data, see Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 89–94.

[10] *COS* 1.74:188; Boaz Stavi, *The Reign of Tudhaliya II and Šuppiluliuma: The Contribution of the Hittite Documentation to a Reconstruction of the Amarna Age*, THeth 31 (Heidelberg: Winter, 2015), 131. A similar event happens later in the text with the king of Mitanni.

[11] Lorenz and Schrakamp, “Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!,” 40 (*KBo* 3.4 obv. II 9–14; *CTH* 61.I.A).

[12] *COS* 2.16:87 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

> Anum-hirbi, the king of Mama, speaks as follows: ‘Tell Warsama, the king of Kanesh: “You have written to me: ‘The Man of Taisama is my slave; I shall keep watch over him. But will you keep watch over the Man of Sibuha, your slave?’ Since the Man of Taisama is your dog, why does he quarrel with other princes? Does the Man of Sibuha, my dog, quarrel with other princes? Will a king of Taisama become a third king with us?
>
> ‘“When my enemy conquered me, the Man of Taisama invaded my country, and destroyed twelve of my cities, and carried away their cattle and sheep. He spoke as follows: ‘The king is dead, so I have taken my fowler’s snare.’ Instead of protecting my country and giving me heart, he not only burned up my country but created evil-smelling smoke.
>
> ‘“While your father Inar was laying siege for nine years to the city of Harsamna, did my people invade your land, and did they kill a single ox or sheep?”’[13]

3.1.3. Early Mesopotamian

An unknown ruler of Lagash included in a royal inscription a message that he sent to his enemy. “He *replied*: ‘Be it known that your city will be completely destroyed! Surrender! Be it kno[wn] that your city will be completely destroyed! Surrender!’”[14] An omen text from Susa includes the line “one king will send a declaration of war to another king [*ni-ku-ur-tam išappar*].”[15] A broken text from Mari recounts an anecdote concerning the killing of a group of envoys sent peacefully to the king of Eshnunna (M.11371 = LAPO 17.547). Hammurabi of Babylon promised Zimri-Lim of Mari that he was going to war against Siwapalarhuhpak and would not stop fighting until he discussed the matter with Zimri-Lim.[16]

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[13] Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 34.

[14] RIME 1:290, E1.9.10.1, iv. 1′–9′; for background, see Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 18–19; Sasson, “Yarim Lim’s Declaration of War,” 249.

[15] *CAD* 11.2:331 (MDP 18.258); see also Francesca Rochberg-Halton, *Aspects of Babylonian Celestial Divination: The Lunar Eclipse Tablets of Enūma Anu Enlil*, AfOB 22 (Horn: Berger, 1988), 253, 271.

[16] For historical background, see Sasson, “*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives,” 677–78.

> From this day, while I am (still) alive, With Siwapalarhuhp[ak] I will be at war. My servants, my messengers, with his servants, I will not join, I will not send them [to him]. Without Zi[m]ri-[Lim], King of Mari and of the land of the nomads ("Haneans"), With Siwapala[rhuhpak] I will not make peace.
>
> [I]f with Siwapalar[huhpak] I propose to make peace, (then) with Zimri-Lim, son of Yahdun-Lim, King of Mari and of the land of the nomads ("Haneans"), I will deliberate. If (there is) no (question) of making peace, with Siwapala[rhuhpak] (but) (there is) agreement, we should make peace.[17]

One possible declaration of war in a letter comes from Mari, but Sasson argues that it is a literary fiction rather than an historical letter.[18] The letter is from Yarim-Lim (father-in-law of Zimri-Lim) to Yashub-Yahad (of whom nothing is known). Further, the letter was found at Mari rather than Der (destination) or Aleppo (place of writing), which might further imply that it does not reflect a historical event.

> Tell Yašub-yahad; Yarim-Lim, your brother, says: Šamaš ought to investigate your conduct and mine and come to judgment. While I have acted as father and brother toward you, toward me you have acted as villain and enemy. What good was it that, by means of the weapons of Addu and Yarim-Lim, I saved the city of Babylon and gave life to your land and to you? Were it not for Addu and Yarim-Lim, 15 years ago, the city of Der might have been cast to the winds as if it were chaff; one would never have found it and you could not have treated me like this? Certainly, Sin-gamil, king of Diniktum, very much like you would keep answering me with hostility and provocations. Having moored 500 skiffs in Diniktum's quay, I sank his land as well as him for 12 years! Now, as to you being like him: you are continually responding to me with hostility and provocations. I swear to you by Addu, my city's god, and by Sin, my personal god: [may I be punished] should I ever go away before annihilating your land and you! Now therefore, I shall come at springtime and shall pitch camp at your city's gate. I shall have you witness the galling weapons of Addu and of Yarim-Lim.[19]

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[17] *TLC* 1:219 (LAPO 16.290).

[18] Sasson, "*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives," 686–90.

[19] Ibid., 686–87; also Foster, *Before the Muses*, 226.

As an example of an ultimatum Sasson cites a Mari text in which the Marshall of Elam threatened Hammurabi of Babylon. "So says the Marshall [of Elam] to Hammurabi: My servant Atamrum (of Andarig) took you as his son (vassal). Yet I keep hearing that you are constantly sending your letters to Babylon and to Mari. You must not again send your letters to Babylon and Mari. If you again send your letters to Babylon and Mari, I will *move aggressively* against you."[20] Shamshi-Adad's letter to his father Yasmah-Adad included his plan about the effect the rumor of his coming will have on Sumu-epuh of Aleppo (without reference to direct communication). "Sumu-epuh will hear the rumors of your coming and will give up his conquests: Dūr-Adad, my fortress and many other towns that the enemy has attacked. Then that country will calm down."[21]

3.1.4. Assyrian

As described in the previous chapter, the Assyrians preferred peaceful resolutions in which their enemy surrendered. The account of Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem in 2 Kgs 18:19–25 provides an example of what a speech directed at an enemy calling on them to surrender might have looked like.[22]

> The Rabshakeh said to them, "Say to Hezekiah: Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria: On what do you base this confidence of yours? Do you think that mere words are strategy and power for war? On whom do you now rely, that you have rebelled against me? See, you are relying now on Egypt, that broken reed of a staff, which will pierce the hand of anyone who leans on it. Such is Pharaoh king of Egypt to all who rely on him. But if you say to me, 'We rely on the LORD our God,' is it not he whose high places and altars Hezekiah has removed, saying to Judah and to Jerusalem, 'You shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem'? Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. How then can you repulse a single captain among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Moreover,

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[20] Jack M. Sasson, *Judges 1–12: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 6D (New Haven: Yale, 2014), 418 (A.6 = LAPO 17.556 = Sasson 3.2.a.i).

[21] *ANEHST*, 117 (ARM 1.43 = LAPO 17.492).

[22] For a survey of Assyrian declarations of war, see Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 168–71.

> is it without the Lord that I have come up against this place to destroy it? The Lord said to me, Go up against this land, and destroy it." (NRSV)

Another example of such a call to surrender comes from a letter reporting on the siege of Babylon. The Assyrian leaders went to the Marduk gate where Babylonian officials serving Mukin-zeri were present, but they addressed the people of the city and called on them to surrender because the Assyrian king promised to let them retain their privileged position (SAA 19.98 = *COS* 4.43:219–20). Such a speech might even be included in a relief of Sargon II in which a man inside a siege engine facing the besieged city reads from a scroll (fig. 3.1).[23] Esarhaddon's letter to Assur included the transcript of a letter he sent to the Shubrian king.[24]

Sargon II recorded in his eighth campaign that when Rusa had set up his army, the Urartian king sent him a messenger to encourage him to fight. In response, Sargon II did not provide any rest for his men but directly attacked the Urartians.[25] Another example of a declaration of war comes from edition C of the annals of Assurbanipal, who records a letter he sent to Indabigash of Elam through a messenger. He claims that even before his messenger arrived with the letter, Indabigash had been overthrown in a revolt and Ummanaldasi installed in his place. In the letter he says, "Because you have not sent (back) these people, I am coming to destroy your cities. I will carry off [the people] of Susa, Madaktu (and) Hidalu. I will hurl you from your royal throne, and I will place another on your throne. The (evil) which (the gods) inflicted upon Teumman, I will bring upon you."[26]

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[23] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:320, 425; Pauline Albenda, *The Palace of Sargon King of Assyria: Monumental Wall Reliefs at Dur-Sharrukin, from Original Drawings Made at the Time of Their Discovery in 1843–1844 by Botta and Flandin*, Synthèse 22 (Paris: Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1986), pl. 136; Julian Reade, "Visual Evidence for the Status and Activities of the Assyrian Scribes," in *Leggo! Studies Presented to Frederick Mario Fales on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Giovanni B. Lanfranchi et al., LAOS 2 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2012), 713.

[24] RINAP 4:80, 33, obv. ii.1–8.

[25] *COS* 4.42:203–4; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 797–98.

[26] *ARAB* 2:341, §878; see also Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 232. For a discussion of this incident (and the confusion between different versions of Assurbanipal's inscriptions), see M. W. Waters, *A Survey of Neo-Elamite History*, SAAS 12 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2000), 65–66.

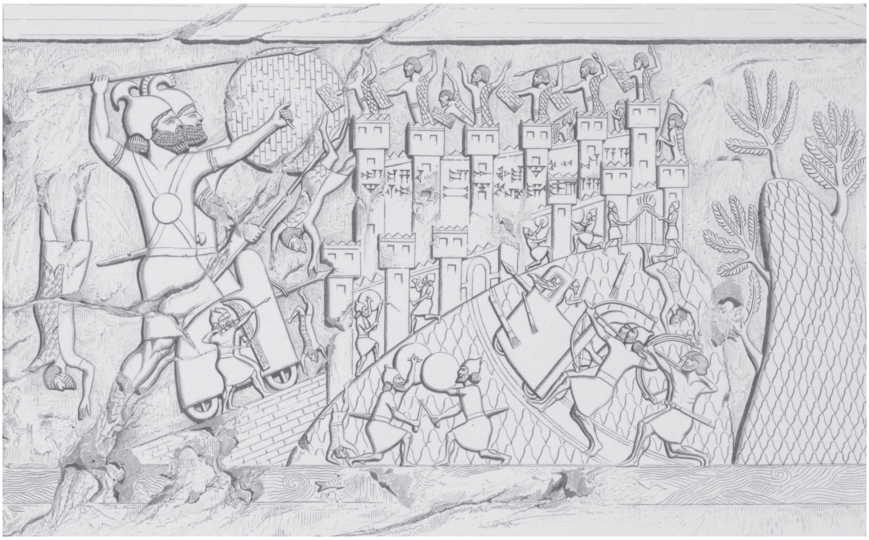

Fig. 3.1. Calling for surrender. Picture 2 of Salle XIV in Paul Emile Botta and Eugène Flandin, *Monument de Ninive*, pl. 145. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library.

3.1.5. Later Empires

A chronicle records a declaration of war during Kassite times. "King Ḫurba-tela of Elam [appealed] to Kurigalzu: 'Come! Join battle, you and me, at Dūr-Šulgi!'"[27] A broken Babylonian letter which appears to be sent from a Neo-Babylonian king (most likely Nabopolassar) to an Assyrian king (perhaps Sin-shar-ishkun, one of the last Assyrian kings), described the various wrongs done by the Assyrians and proclaimed that Marduk had appointed him to avenge those wrongs.[28] However, this letter might also be a later literary construct rather than a historical letter sent to the Assyrian king.[29] Xenophon recorded that Cyrus sent an ultimatum to a king in Armenia, warning him to provide tribute, when he was on the border of Armenian territory (*Cyr.* 2.4.31).

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[27] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 278–81.

[28] Pamela Gerardi, "Declaring War in Mesopotamia," *AfO* 33 (1986): 30–38 (BM 55467); for a positive view on its historicity, see Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 170–71.

[29] Sasson, "*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives," 688; Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar*, 6–7.

3.1.6. West Semitic

An Amarna letter recorded an ultimatum that Yanhamu sent to Milkilu (along with a demand for two thousand shekels of silver): "Hand ov[er] your wife and your sons, or I will kill (you)."[30] Although not technically a declaration of war, Ben-Hadad declared to Ahab that he was about to attack the besieged city of Samaria when Ahab rejected his surrender terms (1 Kgs 20:10). After the Judean king Amaziah defeated Edom and felt confident, he sent messengers to the king of Israel, Jehoash, with the message "Come, let us look one another in the face" (2 Kgs 14:8 NRSV).

3.2. Intelligence

> Those who do not know the conditions of mountains and forests, hazardous defiles, marshes and swamps, cannot conduct the march of any army; Those who do not use local guides are unable to obtain the advantages of the ground.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, 7.10–11

> It is essential to seek out enemy agents who have come to conduct espionage against you and to bribe them to serve you. Give them instructions and care for them. Thus doubled agents are recruited and used. It is by means of the doubled agent that native and inside agents can be recruited and employed.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, 13.17–18[31]

After determining to go to war (and perhaps communicating with the enemy), the next task facing ancient armies was to learn about their enemies, the strength of their armies, and the route to battle. Armies gathered intelligence about the enemy armies by enlisting (or planting) informants in the enemy homeland, sending out scouts before battle, and asking the gods to provide intelligence through divination.

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[30] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 316–17 (EA 270).

[31] Sun Tzu lists five types of spies: native spies (recruited from the enemy's populace), inside spies (recruited from the enemy's government officials), doubled agents (enemy spies turned against them), expendable spies (friendly spies who pass along incorrect information), and living spies (friendly spies who gather information). For the list, see *Art of War*, 13.5–11.

3.2.1. Egyptian

The details of Egyptian intelligence operations are scarce.[32] Although it does not offer any details, a text in P.Anast. 2 praised Merenptah for his ability to know what was happening everywhere in the world. "The affairs of each country are told to you while you are at rest in your palace; And you hear the speech of all nations for you have millions of ears.… If one speaks—even a voice from the underworld—it reaches your ear; If one does something—and it is concealed—your eye will still observe it."[33]

The Amarna letters offer extensive evidence of vassal kings who were happy to inform the pharaoh about what was happening in their lands. The many letters from the Bronze Age illustrate as well the importance of messengers sent between the kings. Besides delivering messages from their masters, they most likely also gathered information on the kingdoms they were visiting.[34] EA 69 includes a request to the pharaoh to ask his messenger Appiha about recent events in Gubla. Egyptians stationed in foreign lands also provided information to the king. Amenmosi was a troop captain in Retjenu during the Eighteenth Dynasty who referred to himself as the "eyes of the king of Lower Egypt and ears of the king of Upper Egypt in the foreign land of wretched Retjenu."[35]

The Egyptians set up military patrols at their borders that would roam the frontier to ensure everything was in order. A stela found in the Kurkur Oasis (in Lower Nubia west of the Nile) from the time of Tutankhamen illustrates this. A Medjai patrolmen was rebuked for not taking a seal, and he defended himself by appealing to his normal routine: "How great they are, the four *iteru* of travel which I make daily; five times going up (the mountain), five times going down (the mountain); so do not let me be replaced by another!" Since four *iteru* were about forty-two kilometers (twenty-six miles), he covered a large amount of ground on a daily basis.[36]

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[32] For a survey, see Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 441–45.

[33] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 141–42.

[34] For more on these messengers, see Trevor Bryce, *Letters of the Great Kings of the Ancient Near East: The Royal Correspondence of the Late Bronze Age* (London: Routledge, 2003), 63–75.

[35] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 2*, 190–91 (Tomb of Amenmosi).

[36] John Coleman Darnell and Colleen Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies: Battle and Conquest during Ancient Egypt's Late Eighteenth Dynasty* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, 2007), 113–17.

Several accounts detail the importance of scouts before battle. Limited evidence suggests that Egyptian scouts were mounted on horses to improve their speed.[37] The Medjai, who were originally desert nomads, became known as desert scouts and policemen in the New Kingdom, leading to the word losing any ethnic association.[38] Kamose also recounted how he intercepted a message from the king of the Hyksos enlisting the support of the Nubian king against him.[39] Apparently reflecting how messengers carried their messages, Amenhotep II captured an enemy messenger with "a letter of clay at his throat."[40] Thutmose III employed scouts on his campaign culminating in the battle at Megiddo. The report at the war council concerning the entrance of enemy troops into Megiddo implies the use of scouts, and after the generals provided their input further intelligence arrived that influenced the king's decision: "Then intelligence reports [were brought] concer[ning that feeble enemy]."[41] As described below, Egyptian intelligence in Ramesses II's campaign against the Hittites at Qadesh failed; Kenneth Kitchen suggests that Ramesses II most likely would have demoted those overseeing military intelligence and replaced them with others.[42] Most spectacularly, a legend preserved in a late demotic papyrus records the story of Prince Pedikhons and Queen Serpot, in which the Queen called on her younger sister Ashteshyt to dress as a man, infiltrate the enemy camp and gather intelligence about their army.[43]

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[37] Catherine Rommelaere, *Les chevaux du Nouvel Empire égyptien: origines, races, harnachement*, Étude 3 (Brussels: Connaissance de l'Égypte ancienne, 1991), 129–32; Alan R. Schulman, "Egyptian Representations of Horsemen and Riding in the New Kingdom," *JNES* 16 (1957): 263–71; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 88–89.

[38] For more details on their employment as scouts, see Kate Liszka, "'We Have Come to Serve Pharaoh': A Study of the Medjay and Pangrave Culture as an Ethnic Group and as Mercenaries from c. 2300 BCE until c. 1050 BCE" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2012), 308–87.

[39] *ANET*, 555.

[40] *ANET*, 246.

[41] *COS* 2.2A:9; for commentary on this event, see Anthony J. Spalinger, "Some Notes on the Battle of Megiddo and Reflections on Egyptian Military Writing," *MDAI* 30 (1974): 224.

[42] Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 65.

[43] *AEL* 3:152–53.

3.2.2. Hittite

Like the Egyptians, the Hittites employed their vassal kings to gain information about distant lands, especially in regard to sedition. For example, a treaty between a Hittite king (perhaps Hantili II?) and Paddatissu of Kizzuwatna required the vassal king to report sedition. "[If] a subject of the Great King plots against his lord while remaining in Hatti, and Paddatissu hears about it, he must report it to the Great King."[44] The Hittite king promised to do the same for Paddatissu. In a treaty between Tudhaliya II and Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna, the king required the following of his vassal: "If some other land begins war [against] His Majesty, Sunashshura must inform (?) [His Majesty] <as soon as> he hears of it."[45] As noted earlier for Egypt, messengers brought letters between kings and could gather important information about the broader world. However, messengers could also potentially be mistreated or led astray, as illustrated by a clause of a treaty. "If His Majesty sends his messenger to Sunashshura, Sunashshura must not harm in any way. He must not ensnare(?) him by means of a magical plant."[46]

Conversely, the Hittite king required secrecy of his vassal kings. "[In respect to the fact that] they now bring you up to my palace, and that [you hear about(?)] the customs of the palace—it is important! You shall not [divulge] outside the palace what [you …] or what you hear."[47] A vassal was required to tell all secrets to the Hittite king, even if the secret communication came from a fellow vassal.[48] A vassal was also prohibited from informing the enemy of a Hittite attack.[49] Ashapala (perhaps a town commander) swore an oath not to trick the Hittite king. "We will not trick him, though. Should the enemy set about to attack at another place, we will name for him that other place as well, so that they can defend the other place."[50]

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[44] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 12 (*CTH* 26); see also ibid., 20 (*CTH* 41/131).

[45] Ibid., 20 (*CTH* 41/131).

[46] Ibid., 22 (*CTH* 41/131).

[47] Ibid., 31 (*CTH* 42).

[48] Ibid., 46 (*CTH* 51); see also the oath of the town commanders to tell the Great King about any evil matter in Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 201 (*CTH* 260).

[49] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 65 (*CTH* 66).

[50] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 243 (*CTH* 270).

The Hittites could also ask their gods about potential enemy activity using a wide array of divinatory techniques.[51] One example is found in an oracle concerning the king wintering in Hattusa: "Will someone outside revolt?"[52] Rarely, a Hittite king would ask about international events: "Will the king of Assyria perish at the hand of the enemy?"[53] More commonly, he would ask about vassals. "Will Ḫuqqana of Azzi not defect from My Majesty? (Answer: He will.)"[54]

Hittite texts might refer in a few places to scouts or spies. An oracle report asked about enemy scouts. "Should I write to the noblemen so that they keep attacking the route used by the (enemy) scouts? (The matter) is pressing."[55] A draft of a treaty with the Kaska (with an unknown Hittite king) stipulates that they must not facilitate the passage of enemy spies. "[If] from a hostile land, a spy enters(?) anywhere into the Ha[tti]-land, [and you see hi]m, then [you must g]ive him no food ('bread'), [and] not set [him(?) on the road(?)]. [But, through your] terr[ain], you must not let [him] pa[ss]."[56]

The Deeds of Suppiluliuma might refer to scout troops (ÉRIN.MEŠ *ḫalugaeš*), but the translation is not certain.[57] The Instructions for Priests and Temple Officials refer to a "scout watchman" (*weḫeškatalla-*).[58] A few letters describe the work of the *šapašalli-*, who seem to act as scouts.[59] For example, in a letter from a Hittite king to Kassu, he berated the "chief of the Army Inspectors" about his lack of intelligence gathering when Kassu wrote that the enemy was pressing him. "So—was that enemy enchanted, that you did not recognize him? (From now on) be on the highest state of alert against the enemy. Concerning what you wrote me, saying: 'I have just sent out scouts, and they have scouted out the cities Malazziya and Takkašta.' I have heard it. Fine."[60] In another letter Adad-beli wrote to inform the king that the Kaska tribes had entered Hittite territory in two places, but then disappeared. He had sent "long-distance scouts" (KASKAL GÍD.DA; "scouts of the long road") to see if they had permanently left the area.[61] The instructions for the frontier post governors included commands about the duty of the scouts (NÍ.ZU) to keep watch around the outpost.[62]

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[51] For a study of the mechanics of these techniques, see Richard H. Beal, "Hittite Oracles," in *Magic and Divination in the Ancient World*, ed. Leda Ciracolo and Jonathan Seidel, SAMD 2 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 57–81.

[52] *COS* 1.179:208 (*KUB* 5.4 and *KUB* 18.53; *CTH* 563.2; *KUB* 5.3 and *KUB* 18.52; *CTH* 563.1.A).

[53] Richard H. Beal, "Gleanings from Hitite Oracle Questions on Religion, Society, Psychology and Decision Making," in *Silva Anatolica: Anatolian Studies Presented to Maciej Popko on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Piotr Taracha (Warsaw: Agade, 2002), 35 (*KUB* 18.69; *CTH* 582).

[54] Ibid., 32 (*KUB* 18.2; *CTH* 579.1).

[55] Gary Beckman, Trevor Bryce, and Eric Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts*, WAW 28 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 231.

[56] *TLC* 1:1045 (*KUB* 31.105 = *CTH* 138:2).

[57] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 238.

[58] Ibid., 260–61.

[59] Ibid., 266–68.

The Egyptian record of the battle at Qadesh referred to Hittite scouts. The "Bulletin" account describes the work of two Shasu spies, who informed Ramesses II (while he was still at Shabtuna) that the Hittite king had stayed in Hatti because he was scared of the pharaoh. However, in reality the Hittite king had sent these spies to mislead the Egyptian king, as the Hittite king was actually at Qadesh.[63] Later, when Ramesses II drew closer to Qadesh, his troops captured two Hittite scouts, who reveal that the Hittite king was already there. In reliefs of the battle, Ramesses II described the interrogation (in the panel under the feet of the pharaoh): "The arrival of the scout of Pharaoh, LPH, bringing 2 Hittite scouts of the despicable Fallen One of Hatti before Pharaoh, LPH. They are beaten in the (royal) presence, to make them tell where the despicable Fallen One of Hatti is" (fig. 3.2).[64]

A few references to enemy informants are also found. In the siege of Urshu, an informant from inside the enemy city told them important information about life in the city.[65] A Middle Hittite letter passes along information to the king that had been learned from an informer, though the letter is badly broken. "Here, from the land of [...] a refugee [has come. He has said] to me the following: '(The inhabitants) of the city of

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[60] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 105 (*HKM* 6; *CTH* 186).

[61] Ibid., 174–75, 383 (*HKM* 46; *CTH* 188).

[62] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 216–19 (*CTH* 261.I).

[63] For the Bulletin text, see *COS* 2.5B:39; *RITA* 2.3B:15.

[64] R.8 in *RITA* 2.3C:19; for the reliefs, see Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. 1, 4, 6; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:81, 92, 169; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 281, 287, 291.

[65] Gary Beckman, "The Siege of Uršu Text (*CTH* 7) and Old Hittite Historiography," *JCS* 47 (1995): 26.

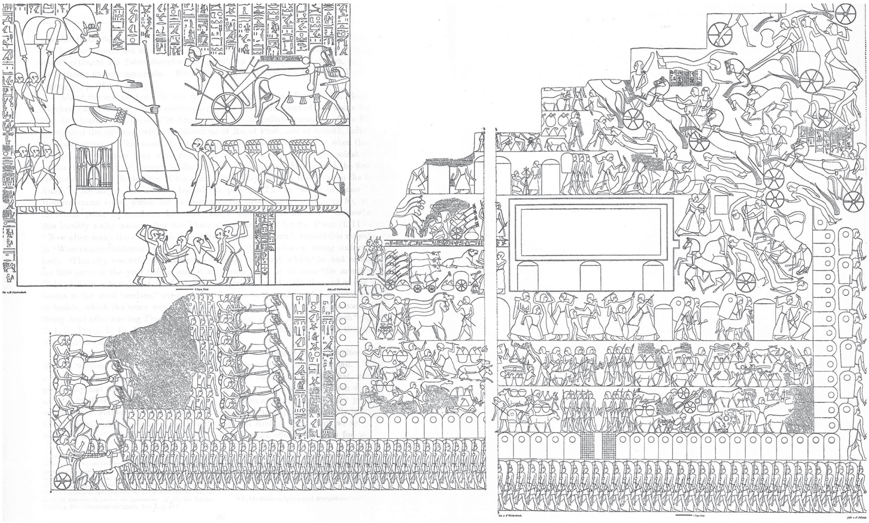

Fig. 3.2. Beating the Hittite scouts. Relief of Ramesses II at the Ramesseum. Line drawing from James Henry Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 1.

Kurta were again […] And they […] Earlier as […] The people of the town GURUN-aššа […] The troops of the land of Titi-[…] it/they […] Now, as soon as the land […] The troops of the city of […]'"[66]

3.2.3. Early Mesopotamia

Like the other nations, intelligence was an important area for these early kingdoms.[67] Hammurabi proclaimed that "I will not send (troops) as long as I do not have information concerning the enemy."[68] Vassal kings passed along information that would be vital for planning wars (ARM 2.141 = LAPO 16.339; ARM 5.33 = LAPO 17.536). Officials living in other countries, such as Ibal-pi-El in Babylon with Hammurabi, also provided extensive information.[69] Sasson suggests that an official named Buqaqum was an intelligence officer whose job was to gather intelligence and present it to the king.[70]

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[66] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 44 (*KBo* 18.58; *CTH* 188).

[67] For more on intelligence at Mari, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 37–40; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 204–5.

[68] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 38 (ARM 2.25 = LAPO 17.587).

[69] Ibid., 38–39.

Many references to spying are found in this time period. Omens warned of the danger of leaking information: "someone who serves the king will continually betray his secrets to an enemy country."[71] Many examples substantiate this warning. One military officer from Mari noted in a letter to another officer the following: "You know well how our lord [Zimri-Lim] has admonished a couple of times in meetings we attended, 'Why is it that confidential information takes to the wind as soon as I tell all of you?'"[72] A military commander told Zimri-Lim about a secret agent he planted in the court of Hammurabi and several of the messages he heard through the agent (ARM 26.381). Based on a few references to spying in extispicy texts, Ulla Jeyes suggests that a diviner could potentially operate in enemy lands and hurt enemy morale through their omens.[73] A treaty between Zimri-Lim of Mari and Ibal-pi-El of Eshnunna contained a clause that prohibited them spreading secret news about troop movements from each other: "I will not say this secret message (even) to my (own) servants."[74] Yamsum wrote to his lord about an officer who revealed secrets under the influence of alcohol.

> Kunnam did not know that Ibni-Addu was friends with my [lord]. And in his drunkenness he made words (to Ibni-Addu). He (said), "Don't you know that the word of Zimri-Lim is accessible to The Vizier?" I (said), "How so?" He (Ibni-Addu answered), "A Hanean, who attends to the kings, keeps letting (information) go out to Išar-Lim. And moreover, there are those in the detachment who keep sending messages to Išar-Lim." Now, my lord must check on them, and there are those who keep letting the word <of> my lord go out. And my lord must call them to account. Kunnam never tells lies. The man represents the lips of his lord. He never tells lies. I am afraid Išar-Lim acts the same way as Atamrum.[75]

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[70] Ibid., 38.

[71] *CAD* 12:399 (YOS 10 25:31), with other examples.

[72] Sasson, *Judges 1–12*, 232 (A.158 = LAPO 16.55 = Sasson 2.1.c.ii.1).

[73] Ulla Jeyes, *Old Babylonian Extispicy: Omen Texts in the British Museum* PIHANS 64 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 1989), 32–33.

[74] *TLC* 1:215 (A.361 = LAPO 16.292 = Sasson 1.6.c.iv.2).

[75] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 295 (ARM 26.311 = ARM 2.124 = LAPO 17.554 = Sasson 2.1.c.ii.1.note).

The gods could also provide information about the broader diplomatic picture. Ibal-pi-El warned about several servants who became part of the private council of Hammurabi. Their closeness to the Babylonian king is illustrated by their knowledge of the results of the extispicies.

> The servants of Išme-Dagan, PN, PN_2 and PN_3, lords of (their) lands, changed allegiance (from Zimrilim to Hammurapi) and they themselves have become the ones privy to Hammurapi's secrets, when (the diviners) report extispicies, PN, PN_2 and PN_3 are not kept out but are present, they always hear the oracle—what secrets could there be other than the secrets of the diviners? While his (Hammurapi's) own servants do not hear the diviners' secrets, those men do![76]

Dagan declared through a prophetess that the peacemaking of Ibal-pi-El, the king of Eshnunna was false. The prophecy was written down by Inibshina and sent to her brother Zimri-Lim. "The peacemaking of the man of Ešn[unna] is false: beneath straw water runs!"[77] Although most Old Babylonian extispicy texts focus on events within the country, sometimes information about other places is mentioned, such as the following: "If the apex of the heart is enveloped with fat to the right and it (the fat) is dark: Adad will (cause a) flood in the enemy's country."[78]

The mechanics of diplomacy, such as messengers delivering the letters of the kings to other kings and the reports of vassal kings, provided important information about other lands. Bahdi-Lim wrote that he was concerned about possible intelligence leaks by a messenger. "Yarpa-Adad, a messenger of Qatna, who is sent to my lord, concerning dispatching him to my lord, I had written earlier. (But) now I have considered (the matter) and have retained the man. I said to myself: 'Perhaps the foreign (?) auxiliaries have not gathered before my lord, and if I send this man to my lord, he might realize the condition of the troops.' For this reason, I detained him."[79] Marriages designed to solidify alliances could also provide important sources of information.[80]

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[76] *CAD* 12:399 (ARM 26.104 = Sasson 5.7.a.1); see also ARM 26.381, in which Sharrum-Sululi recounts how he befriended two men from the servants of Hammurabi who "do not hide a single word they hear in the palace, be it a secret or an affair of the palace" (trans. *CAD* 12:399).

[77] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 28 (ARM 26.197 = Sasson 5.5.b.ii).

[78] Jeyes, *Old Babylonian Extispicy*, 162 (BM 96948); for several accounts of diviners being proved incorrect, see Sasson, "*Casus Belli* in the Mari Archives," 682–83.

Moving on to the battlefield, texts from early Mesopotamia (especially the Mari archives) provide us with extensive evidence of scouts. A legend about Sargon the Great might describe using merchants to learn about the road ahead on the campaign, but the details are not clear.[81] A group of diviners wrote to their lord (most likely the Yaminite Sumu-dabi) about their enemy, Zimri-Lim. The diviners had sent out a scout (*ḫālilum*) who reported that Zimri-Lim was preparing to attack (ARM 26.168 = Sasson 3.4.a.ii). Yanuh-Samar warned of Hanean secret agents that were gathering military information leading to potential ambushes and wondered if he should remove the Haneans from the land of Apum (ARM 26.358). Zimri-Adad informed Zimri-Lim that five thousand troops went on campaign, but a secret agent warned the enemy and the troops returned empty-handed (ARM 27.141). Abi-Epuh complained to Yasmah-Adad that the scouts of Yabliya were negligent (ARM 26.156 = Sasson 3.2.c.viii.2). The letter A.3555 illustrates the role of a scout (*mâkûm*) in gathering information about the enemy. "J'ai envoyé des espions; ils se sont rendu compte de ce qu'était le terroir irrigué de cette ville."[82] Intelligence was often incomplete, as illustrated in the report of Shaknum, who knew that a general had left a town with soldiers of Eshnunna, but he did not know where he was going. "Peut-être est-ce vers Ašnakkum, peut-être est-ce vers Šurušum qu'il veut aller: qui peut le savoir?"[83] Sometimes information could be passed through fire signals.[84] "The cities are 1,800 meters apart. (As a result), he saw the reinforcements of the land when I secured the city of Himush, (which is) across from, and he sent fire-signals. Then, all of the cities on the other side of the riverbank from the land of Ursim received his (message)."[85]

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[79] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 39 (ARM 6.19 = LAPO 16.429 = Sasson 2.1.a.v).

[80] For examples of this with Zimri-Lim's daughters, see Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 151–52.

[81] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 111–21.

[82] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 305; ARM 26.420 = Sasson 2.1.a.vi.4.note uses the word in a similar scouting context.

[83] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 166 (ARM 2.135 = LAPO 17.551).

[84] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 10.

[85] *COS* 4.48:229 (ARM 2.131 = LAPO 17.491). For other letters that refer to

Disinformation was also passed along to the enemy.[86] A letter quotes Hammurabi saying that the numbers are inflated: "When I dispatch 1 hundred troops, the one who ⸢hears⸣ [it] will quote it as 1 thousand. And when [I dispatch] 1 thousand ⸢troops⸣, he will quote it at as 10 thousand."[87] Likewise, after being rebuked for not being careful with counting the troops he fed, Zakira-Hammu defended himself. "What (is the difference) whether I issued dinners for 1 thousand or 2 thousand troops, and (why should) I have checked on those troops? And I called (the number of) those troops 2 thousand because of fiend and foe. I (said to myself), 'My lord will check on them.'"[88] Ishme-Dagan wrote to his brother Yasmah-Adad about a plan to smuggle boats to carry soldiers across a river without the enemy noticing by sending boats with food in them that would then be used to transport the soldiers.[89]

Finally, information could be learned from the enemy themselves. In a letter Puzur-Shulgi informed Shulgi, the king of Ur (ca. 2000 BCE), that he had captured a spy and learned the passwords of the enemy.

> Speak to my king, saying (the words) of Puzur-Šulgi, general of Bad-Igihursaga, your servant: Is it not for the sake of his own well-being that my king fashions (objects) of silver and gold for the gods? My king, for the well-being of the army and of his homeland, has built the great fortifications of Igihursaga for the sake of the vile enemy and of the people of his homeland. But now the enemy army has mustered (for battle). A certain individual who was brought before me as a deserter gave me some information as he was passing (through) and then went back out (again). Now I really know the enemy's passwords![90]

Meptum wrote to Ashkur-Adad of Karana that he had attempted to gain intelligence from some enemy reports. "They have brought in four tablets of the governor of Susa in Elam…. I opened those tablets … but there was

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their use, see ARM 4.32 = LAPO 17.503; ARM 5.68 = LAPO 17.504; A.71 = LAPO 17.623. However, these may have been merely calls for help rather than a code to be deciphered; see Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 98.

[86] Ibid., 306–8.

[87] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 475 (ARM 2.23 = LAPO 17.590).

[88] Ibid., 438 (ARM 27.80).

[89] ARM 4.81 = LAPO 17.539; see the discussion in deception in warfare below in ch. 4, for translation.

[90] Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur*, 353; also *ANEHST*, 78.

no news in them."[91] Ibal-pi-El relayed the words of Hammurabi to the king concerning his desire to send out a lightly equipped unit to capture informers (ARM 2.22 = LAPO 17.585 = Sasson 3.4.b.ii). Buqaqum and Kibsi-Adad reported on a successful operation to send out border guards to gather informers (ARM 26.475).[92] However, informers could not always be trusted. Shamshi-Adad warned his son about a certain group of informers. "Do not take into service the men of Zalmāqum who are continually recruited as spies (or informers: *ana lišānim*). Do not seek their service. All those hired (?) for you, cloth them and send them away. 3 (?) mina of silver (is the cost) of 20 servants who come (thus) to me."[93]

Along with gathering intelligence, the leaders of Mari sometimes hired people to spread rumors.[94] Shamshi-Adad hired some people of the land of Zalmaqum to spread the news that Mari would not plunder their land; the point of this rumor was to cause the land to revolt against their current lord and turn to follow Mari (ARM 1.10 = LAPO 17.683 = Sasson 3.4.b.vii.note). Finally, guides were employed to help the troops traverse unknown territory. Yasim-El reported to Zimri-Lim that he had a guide to go with them (ARM 26.437).[95] A.3669+ refers to a guide helping to set an ambush.[96]

3.2.4. Assyrian

Although the royal annals do not refer very often to intelligence gathering, thanks to the large number of letters preserved from the Neo-Assyrians we are able to construct a relatively detailed model of how they gathered intelligence.[97] The Assyrians lacked a separate intelligence agency but received intelligence reports from a wide variety of people.[98] Peter Dubovský argues that there were three streams of intelligence. The first he calls the Assyrian network, based on the Assyrian administrative structure in foreign lands. The second stream came from the local network, based on residents of the area who were subservient to Assyria. The third network was based in the temples (this was not as common).[99]

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[91] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 150 (ARM 2.121 = LAPO 16.434 = Sasson 2.2.e.v.3).

[92] For other references to informers in Mari archives, see ARM 2.22 = LAPO 17.585 = Sasson 3.4.b.ii; ARM 26.244 = Sasson 5.7.e.iii; ARM 26.35; ARM 26.325; ARM 26.379; ARM 26.430; ARM 28.171.

[93] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 39–40 (ARM 1.29 = LAPO 17.474 = Sasson 3.4.b.vii).

[94] For more on these rumors, see ibid., 40–41.

[95] Guides also appear in ARM 26.156 = Sasson 3.2.c.viii.2; ARM 26.411; ARM 26.440-bis; ARM 27.47.

[96] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 511.

[97] For more on the Neo-Assyrian intelligence system, see Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 41–57; GUO Honggeng, "The Assyrian Intelligence Activities during the Assyrian Empire," *JAAS* 18 (2004): 59–71; Peter Dubovský,

Information was designed to flow from local informants through the Assyrians living in the country to the king, though at times exceptions were granted.[100] In one letter Nabu-usall[a] asked the king about some informers who wanted to give their information directly to the king.

> Three powerful men of the Kummeans have come and had an audience with me and Mar-Issar, the royal bodyguard. Here is what they said to me: "Our people may go where the king said, but your messenger should take us to the Palace. There is a matter [concerning] another country we (wish to) discuss [in] the king's [pres]ence.[…] …; we [will] not tell it to you, [n]or will we tell it to the royal bodyguard. Else if you do not take us to the Palace, sooner or later we shall say to the king: 'We spoke with the governor and the royal bodyguard, but they did not agree to bring us to the Palace.' " What are the king my lord's orders? (SAA 5.104)

Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies: Reconstruction of the Neo-Assyrian Intelligence Services and Its Significance for 2 Kings 18–19, BibOr 49 (Roma: Biblical Institute Press, 2006); Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant through the Eyes of Assyrian Intelligence Services," in *Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem: Story, History, and Historiography*, ed. Isaac Kalimi and Seth Richardson, CHANE 71 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 249–91; Tamás Dezső, "Neo-Assyrian Military Intelligence," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 221–35; Sarah C. Melville, "Insurgency and Terrorism in the Assyrian Empire during the Late Eighth Century BCE," in *Brill's Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Timothy Howe and Lee L. Brice, Warfare in the Ancient World (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 62–92; Pierre Villard, "Quelques aspects du renseignement militaire dans l'empire néo-assyrien," *HiMA* 3 (2016): 87–99.

98. For a list of over one hundred Assyrian agents just in Babylon between the time of Sargon II and Sennacherib, see Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 115–18.

99. Ibid., 120–22; for an example of the temple informants, see SAA 15.161.

100. The crown prince also stood in for the king; for a study of Sennacherib's role in intelligence-gathering while still a crown prince, see Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 283–85.

Dubovský notes that SAA 15.186 presents a good model of the flow of information.[101] A local informant (Raʾiwanu) reported to Shamash-abu-usur (a local provider?) about the movements of a "son of Zerî." Shamash-abu-usur then reported this to the Assyrian governor and instructed him to "Report it to the Palace!" However, quite often this flow of information was not followed. The chart by Dezső of all the people who reported directly to Sargon II shows that many different streams were encouraged to report information as a way to keep everyone honest and to learn as much as possible about events.[102] The multiple streams of intelligence also could help provide more complete intelligence reports, since such reports could change based on more up-to-date information. In a letter to Sennacherib two military officials in Babylon revoked a previous report of an enemy attack after it became clear that the rumor of an Elamite attack was false (SAA 17.120). Intelligence was often incomplete, as seen in this Middle Assyrian letter from Sin-mudammeq to his lord Assur-iddin. "Ein 1500 Mann (starker) Feind ist im Ḫasūmugebirge versammelt. Wohin sie einfallen werden—ich weiß nicht. Ob sie über Niḫrīja oder über das Land Ḫānu oder über das Ufer des Ḫābūr herfallen—werden ich weiß nicht!"[103]

Local informants proved to be a rich source of data about the movement of enemy troops and leaders (especially the king).[104] A letter to Sargon II (from the crown prince Sennacherib) about the actions of the Urartians illustrates the gathering of intelligence about a neighboring country from local informants (SAA 1.32). The Assyrians required their vassals and allies to inform them about events in the broader world, as demonstrated by Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty.[105]

> If you hear any improper, unsuitable or unseemly word concerning the exercise of kingship which is unseemly and evil against Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate, either from the mouth of his brothers, his uncles, his cousins, his family (var. his people), members of his father's line; or from the mouth of magnates and governors, or from the mouth of the bearded and the eunuchs, or from the mouth of the scholars or

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[101] Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 121–22.

[102] Dezső, "Neo-Assyrian Military Intelligence," 234.

[103] Eva Christiane Cancik-Kirschbaum, *Die mittelassyrischen Briefe aus Tall Šēḫ Ḥamad* (Berlin: Reimer, 1996), 108.

[104] Dezső, "Neo-Assyrian Military Intelligence," 228–31.

[105] Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 153–60; Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 263–64.

> from the mouth of any human being at all, you shall not conceal it but come and report it to Assurbanipal, the great crown prince designate.[106]

The document later makes clear that if the vassal was able, the following action was commanded against these evil-doers: "If you are able to seize them and put them to death, then you shall destroy their name and their seed from the land."[107] A fragmentary treaty (perhaps from the time of Esarhaddon?) commanded a vassal to report to the Assyrian king any news about potential enemies.

> You shall not say: "Go and tell to that king: 'Now, the king of Assyria is marching against you, he has …ed a certain [strat]agem to use against you.'" [Nor] will you conceal from me anything that you hear, be it from the mouth of a king, or on account of a country, (anything) that bears upon or is harmful to us or Assyria, but you will write to me and bring it to my attention. (SAA 2.13)

An example of a good vassal is Arije, the king of Kumme, who reported to the Assyrians about the actions of Urartu and Ukku (SAA 1.29).[108] This situation also illustrates the proper flow of information: the local informants passed information to provincial officials (Arije in this case; in other cases it would be Assyrian officials), who transmitted it to the royal court, where another person (in this case the crown prince Sennacherib) evaluated the information and passed it to the king.[109]

Likewise, Hu-Teshub, a king of Shubria, informed the Assyrian king about the actions of the Urartians (SAA 5.45) and sent an emissary to the Assyrian king (SAA 5.40). However, Assyrian agents learned that Hu-Teshub acted in a similar way towards Urartu, attempting to keep both nations happy by sending deserters back to Urartu instead of Assyria and by receiving many messengers from Urartu (SAA 5.35).[110] The elders of the Sealand wrote to the Assyrian king to tell him about the attempt by Elam to convince them to leave Assyria and join them. However, they rejected their approach and informed the Assyrians about it (SAA 18.86). Sharru-emuranni promised the Assyrian king that he would be faithful to pass along information. "The king, my lord, appointed me in Qunbuna; I tell everything that I see and hear to the king, my lord, I do not conceal anything from the king" (SAA 5.243).

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[106] SAA 2.6, 73–82; also *COS* 4.36:157–58; for lists of all the things that the vassals were required to report to the Assyrian king and of the potential perpetrators, see Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 156–58.

[107] SAA 2.6, 138–41; also *COS* 4.36:158.

[108] For more on this event, see Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 55–60.

[109] For charts illustrating many examples of this flow of information, see ibid., 264–67.

[110] For more on this situation, see ibid., 43–49.

The Assyrians also sought to gather intelligence through divination (primarily during the time of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal).[111] It was so important that not reporting the results of divinatory practices to the king was tantamount to rebellion (see this charge in SAA 16.21). An astrological report (probably to Esarhaddon) signals what would happen because of the moon and the sun being seen together. "On the 15th day the moon and the sun were seen together: a strong enemy will raise his weapons against the land; the enemy will tear down my city gate" (SAA 8.244, 1–3).[112] Another astrological report (also probably to Esarhaddon) relates several results dealing with warfare.

> [If Mars] becomes visible in Tammuz (IV): the cemetery of the warriors will enlarge. [Mars] is said to (portend) death. [If Ma]rs stands in the east: attack of the Subartu and the Kassites against the land. [If] Mars rises scintillating and its radiance is yellow: the king of Elam will die. If Nergal in his appearance is very small and white, and scintillates very much like the fixed stars: he will have mercy on Akkad; the force of my troops will go and defeat the enemy troops, it will conquer the land for which it strives; the enemy troops will not (be able to) stand in the face of my troops; the cattle of Akkad will lie in the steppe undisturbed; sesame (and) dates will prosper. (SAA 8.114)

Esarhaddon frequently requested information from the Sun God through divination. This example deals with the intentions of the Scythians.

> Will the troops of the S[cyth]ia[ns, which have been staying in the district of Mannea and which are (now) moving out from the territory]of Mannea, strive and plan? Will they move out and go through the passes [of Hubuškia] to the city Harrania (and) the city Anisus? Will they take

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[111] Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 270–71.

[112] Hundreds of similar examples are included in SAA 8.

> much plunder and heavy booty from the territory of [Assyria]? Does your great divinity [know it]? (SAA 4.23)

Finally, a few records signal that Assyrian spies were present in other regions. SAA 18.125 records that a certain "lady Ta[…]" was apparently actively gathering information for the Assyrian in a foreign court.[113] Sargon II commanded Abat-Sharri-usur to keep watch secretly over the Chaldean Nabu-eresh (SAA 5.172). More formally, the Assyrians placed their own officials in the courts of their vassals, as seen in the requirement of a clause of the treaty between Esarhaddon and Baal, the king of Tyre, that a letter from the Assyrian king could not be opened unless the "royal deputy" (*qēpu*) was present.[114] This *qēpu* was an Assyrian official serving outside Assyria on special missions who would be able to observe what was happening in other courts and pass that information back to the Assyrian king.[115]

Messengers were also an important source of information, as they could gather intelligence while they were delivering messages.[116] A letter (perhaps to Sargon II) recounted how a messenger sent to confront an Urartian governor learned information about the enemy while he was in their land (SAA 5.2). When Phyrgia made peace with Sargon II, the Assyrian king commanded Assur-sharru-usur "that you should not cut off your messenger from the Phrygian's presence. Write to him in friendly terms and constantly listen to news about him" (SAA 1.1). Messengers were not always treated kindly; a letter from Illil-bani to Esarhaddon reported that the Babylonian Belshunu had not listened to his messenger and had even arrested him (SAA 18.192).

When it came to battle, Assyrian letters and other texts record extensive activity by scouts (*dayyāllu*), though their work also included the spying mentioned above. Dubovský translates the word as "patrollers" and defines them as "Assyrians located in exposed territories and buffer zones and dispatched to enemy territory to collect strategic information or to verify rumors."[117] Esarhaddon once recorded that he captured scouts of Shubria and attached them to his army.[118] Many letters refer to these types of scouts operating in various areas (SAA 1.30; 5.13; 5.24; 5.55; 5.85; 5.87; 5.246). Sargon II instructed a subordinate about gathering intelligence: "Don't be afraid; at the city of Urammu where you are to pitch the camp [there is] a plain which is [very] good for reconnaissance expeditions (*dayāltu*), there is [much] grass there, and it is a [good] place to rest" (SAA 1.13). The knowledge already gained by the king (geographical knowledge, location of the enemy, state of Assyrian morale) indicates the level of intelligence.[119] A general wrote to Sargon II about scouts (*dayālu*) that he sent to gather information about the Urartians near him (SAA 5.3).[120] One letter refers to an Urartian *dayyāllu* (SAA 5.12). Assyrian letters also refer to "informers" (*ša-lišāni* in SAA 5.55; 16.148 and *bātiqu* in SAA 5.164; 16.124), who were most likely foreigners rather than Assyrians (SAA 8.567 records the killing of an informer).[121]

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[113] For more on possible spies, see Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 265–66.

[114] SAA 2.5, iii.11–14; *COS* 4.36:154.

[115] *CAD* 13, s.v. "qīpu" d; for other examples of this official, see SAA 19.39 and RINAP 4.98, r.47. For more on the office, see Peter Dubovský, "King's Direct Control: Neo-Assyrian *Qēpu* Officials," in *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power in the Ancient near East: Proceedings of the Fifty-Fourth Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Würzburg 20–25 July 2008*, ed. Gernot Wilhelm, RAI 54 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2012), 447–58.

[116] Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 266–69.

Sargon II reported that the Urartians had set up fire signals on mountains tops to warn of invaders, but it is unclear if the Assyrians employed similar tactics (their flatter homeland would not have facilitated their use).[122] Several letters deal with patrolling specific sections of land. Ashipa reported to Sargon II on assigning scouts to guard the pass above the town (SAA 5.24). Illil-bani and Assur-belu-taqqin of Nippur complained to Assurbanipal that the land they were responsible for guarding was too large and that they needed cavalry to watch it. "The territory before us is extensive, five stages of territory square. It is a watch for cavalry and archers. We have several times written to the house of our lords about the horses. Now we are keeping watch with archers (only) and praying to the gods of the king, our lord" (SAA 18.197).

Assur-resuwa reported to Sargon II that five Urartian governors had entered Waisi, information he had gained from his scouts: "As to what the king, my lord, wrote me: 'Send out scouts!'—I have sent them twice:

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[117] Ibid., 252.

[118] RINAP 4:84, 33, r.iii.18′.

[119] See Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 79–80.

[120] For more on the historical background of this episode, see ibid., 37–39.

[121] Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 252–54.

[122] *COS* 4.42:209; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 804.

the first have come back and told me these things; the others have not yet come out" (SAA 5.87). The extreme cold of the northern frontier sometimes caused problems for scouting, as evidenced by this letter to an Assyrian king (most likely Tiglath-pileser III). "Perhaps the king my lord will say: 'Why have you (as) Tarton not sent (a report) by the hands of a messenger?' The cold is very severe. I did send scouts (but) they turned back, saying: 'Where shall we go?' When the cold outside has *eased* (and) the cold weather has gone, they will bring a report about the enemy."[123]

The Assyrians would also employ deserters from the enemy to help them gather information.[124] Sometimes letters (such as SAA 5.35) expressed concern about soldiers who had deserted, not just because of the loss of labor but also the danger of the enemy gathering intelligence through them. Bel-ushezib wrote to Esarhaddon instructing him on gathering information in a foreign country before an attack, noting the importance of sending scouts and gathering deserters.

> I have written to the king, my lord, without proper knowledge of the conditions in that country. The lord of kings should consult an expert of the country and then write to his army as he deems best. Your advantage is, in any case, that there are more deserters than fighting soldiers among the enemy. When the whole army is entering, let patrols go and capture their men in the open country and then question them. If the Cimmerians indeed stay away from them, let the whole army invade and assault the cities.[125]

A series of letters to Sargon II from Babylonia reported to him about deserters. Marduk-sharru-usur wrote to the king that a cavalry commander had deserted from the enemy and he had heard that some other cavalrymen might desert as well. In another letter he recommended, "'Let us send them tokens through a Babylonian.' Perhaps the gods of the king my lord will make it (happen) and they will desert" (SAA 15.184). A deserter sometimes tried to convince his own tribe to desert to the Assyrians (SAA 15.157) or, more frequently, assisted the Assyrians for the money (SAA 15.216). Other times deserters might be captured and sold as slaves, as happened in a story recounted in SAA 15.214.

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[123] Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 144 (SAA 19.61 = ND 2720).

[124] Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 43–49; Dubovský, "Sennacherib's Invasion of the Levant," 258–60.

[125] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 156–57 (SAA 10.111).

When Sargon II defeated the Urartian king Rusa in battle, he captured a large number of high-ranking Urartian officials, who would have served well as guides for the next part of his campaign.[126] An unknown author near Urartu reported to an Assyrian king (most likely Tiglath-pileser III) that the Etinaeans (from the Armenian highlands) had attacked the Urartians twice and were preparing to do so again. A prisoner had volunteered to guide the Assyrians along the route.

> Perhaps the king will say: "What is the report about Urartu?" Twice the Etinaeans have made an uprising against him (i.e., the king of Urartu). They (i.e., the Etinaeans, *lit.*, he) are causing him (the king of Urartu) military losses. They have plundered him. For a third time *they are joining up* against him. Ursa (the Urartian king) has come straight from Turushpa, (and) is going yet again against the Etinaeans. When I myself entered into Suruduriani, for the towns which I planted on that side of the Zab, a prisoner came concerning Ursa. He said: "When the forces of Assyria go for you for the third time, *I myself will show you* the route."[127]

Nabu-raʾim-nisheshu and Salamanu wrote to Esarhaddon about interrogating deserters. "As to the deserters whom the governor of Der sent to me (and) about whom the king, my lord, wrote to me 'Interrogate them!'—we have interrogated them" (SAA 16.136). Unfortunately, the result of the interrogation is not included in the letter. Assur-ushallim repeated Esarhaddon's instructions concerning deserters to send them to the crown prince Assurbanipal and reported that they had two Mannean deserters (including a eunuch) who "have things to say" (SAA 16.148). However, capturing deserters could be dangerous. A letter from Sha-Assur-dubbu to Sargon II illustrates the peril of campaigning to recapture deserters.

> I sent two eunuchs of mine with six soldiers and a seal(ed order) for the deserters in Penzâ; they went off with two cohort commanders and had the men brought down. They had dinner there; the brother of the Šubrian (king) too dined with them there. They set out together and were

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126. *COS* 4.42:204; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 798; John Marriott and Karen Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army Among Friends and Enemies in 714 BCE," *JCS* 67 (2015): 132.

127. Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 117 (SAA 19.72 = ND 2453); see also SAA 19.48, where a deserter informed the Assyrians about the price of various items in an enemy city.

> on their way home, when the Šubrians attacked them from an ambush and captured my two eunuchs and the six soldiers. Both of my cohort commanders escaped. I wrote him: "Release the soldiers!" but he said: "I will inquire (into the matter); [i]f they are in my country, I shall give them back." I [se]t out on their trail personally, but they had (already) taken the soldiers up to his fort. (SAA 5.32)

Gathering intelligence was more effective with an interpreter; a letter from Adad-issiya to Sargon II described the use of someone who knew the local language to prepare a report: "The king, my lord, knows that Kubaba-ilaʾi masters the language. I sent him to Tikriš, and he gave us this detailed report. We are herewith sending it to the king, my lord" (SAA 5.217).

3.2.5. Later Empires

Babylonian spies are known from Neo-Assyrian times (SAA 15.218). The book of Ezekiel refers to divination performed by the king of Babylon on his way to attack Jerusalem involving the shaking of arrows to determine whether to go west or east of the Jordan River when he arrived in Damascus.

> Mortal, mark out two roads for the sword of the king of Babylon to come; both of them shall issue from the same land. And make a signpost, make it for a fork in the road leading to a city; mark out the road for the sword to come to Rabbah of the Ammonites or to Judah and to Jerusalem the fortified. For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the way, at the fork in the two roads, to use divination; he shakes the arrows, he consults the teraphim, he inspects the liver. Into his right hand comes the lot for Jerusalem, to set battering rams, to call out for slaughter, for raising the battle cry, to set battering rams against the gates, to cast up ramps, to build siege towers. (Ezek 21:19–22 NRSV)

The extant Persians texts are mostly silent on the topic, but later Greek tradition (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.114; Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.2.10–12) wrote about the "eyes and ears of the King" that operated to inform the Persian king what was happening in his empire.[128]

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[128] For more on these sources, see Jack M. Balcer, "The Athenian Episkopos and the Achaemenid 'King's Eye,'" *AJP* 98 (1977): 255–63.

3.2.6. West Semitic

Although few examples remain of divination at Ugarit in relation to gaining intelligence about foreign affairs, this would most likely have been one method used by many in the area.[129] The Amarna letters reveal the wide use of messengers who would presumably have gathered much information about the areas that they were visiting. A letter found at Ugarit written by a general reported that his men captured a prisoner who was interrogated about the king of Egypt; based on this intelligence the general requested more troops to defend his appointed land.[130] "It was within the fortress that they were fighting; and one man among them was captured, and I interrogated him about the king of Egypt. He (said) thus: 'The king of Egypt is going forth, but he is going unaccompanied. In the coming Eššešu-day his equipment will be moving, and the king will come after the equipment.' "[131]

Scouts appear frequently in the Old Testament and play an important theological role in Israel's recorded history as a barometer of the people's trust in YHWH. The forty-year stay in the wilderness before they were allowed to enter Canaan was due in part to the report the scouts brought back from their trip to Canaan (Num 13–14). Other accounts refer to scouts causing problems, such as those investigating Ai (Josh 7:2–5) and the Danite scouts (Judg 18). In the book of Kings, Ben-Hadad was informed by scouts that the city he was besieging had sent out troops (1 Kgs 20:17).[132] The passive construction "it was told him" (ויגד לו) implies the use of scouts to learn the location of Elisha (2 Kgs 6:13). In some cases the Old Testament portrays YHWH providing information. Most prominently, Elisha passed intelligence to the king of Israel concerning the secret gathering places of the Aramean troops; the Aramean king accused his staff of leaking secrets, but they are confident that it is through Elijah that the secret is known (2 Kgs 8–12).

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[129] See, e.g., a manual of malformed animal fetuses in Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, 135–40 (RS 24.247+).

[130] For more on the historical background to the letter, see Izre'el and Singer, *General's Letter from Ugarit*, 122–83.

[131] Ibid., 25–27.

[132] Technically, the Hebrew text is missing the word "scouts," but is clearly referring to them.

3.3. Mustering Troops

> Those adept in waging war do not require a second levy of conscripts nor more than one provisioning.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War*, 2.9

Before a nation could go to war, the king needed to muster his troops. Most royal texts describe this only in generic fashion, but many administrative texts provide further details on this process (as always, it must be remembered that the process would have changed over the course of time). This section will look at how the various nations and empires raised their troops and gathered them for battle, dividing the discussion into how they recruited their own people for the army and how they incorporated foreigners into the army. The chapter on officers and soldiers will look at the topic more from the perspective of the soldiers and address areas such as training.

3.3.1. Mustering Native Troops

3.3.1.1. Egyptian

One early reference to mustering troops is found in the Instructions of Merikare, which records that men were mustered into the army at age twenty: "Twenty years the youths indulge their wishes, Then ⸢recruits⸣ go forth."[133] Most likely the local nomarchs were responsible for raising their own troops. When the nomarch Amenemhet wrote that when he went on campaigns with the Pharaoh Sesostris I, he brought several hundred troops that he had raised from his home.[134] However, most of the information about mustering troops comes from the New Kingdom, when the army grew much larger. A statue of an officer from the Eighteenth Dynasty refers to him as a "superintendent of recruits."[135] According to the edict of Horemheb, the Egyptians had two centers for their troops in the north and south.[136] Another source says that conscripted infantrymen were often sent either to Kharu in the north or Kush in the south.[137] A building called a Broad Hall appears to have been a central military headquarters and perhaps the place where troops were mustered as well as an arsenal where weapons were distributed to the troops.[138] Papyrus Lansing refers to the actions of various commanders at such a location: "They go in and out of the Broad Halls of the Palace (l.p.h.); they (say): 'Produce him that can work!'"[139] It is not known how long men were required to serve in the army when they are conscripted, but they might have served in one-year rotations.[140]

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[133] *AEL* 1:101; for the argument that the minimum age was much younger in the New Kingdom, see James K. Hoffmeier, "Military," *OEAE* 2:404.

[134] *ARE 1:*251–52.

[135] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 2*, 178 (Statue in Florence).

Several texts reveal how troops were mustered for battle. One of the scribal texts satirizing the life of a soldier includes the following details about mustering troops: "All subjects are mustered, and the finest of them are taken. The grown man is put to be a soldier; the stripling [*mgꜣ*] to be a skirmisher; the child, he is brought up (only) to be taken away from his mother's bosom."[141] A letter collected in P.Bologna 1094 from a scribe to his master "Mahu, a scribe of the armoury of Pharaoh," says "The vizier brought three youths, saying 'Put them to be priests in the temple of Hetephermaat-Merenptah, l.p.h., in the House of Ptah!', but they were seized and taken away to the north, it being said 'They shall be infantrymen!' Indeed, may you hurry and go after them, and write their condition."[142]

A scribe from the Nineteenth Dynasty wrote to his father Ramose (who worked in a temple), saying "I spoke with the chief record keepers of the granary and told them, 'Take the three cultivators of the god to serve this year.'"[143] Alan R. Schulman understands the service to be as an infantryman. The same letter describes the search for a Syrian who had been assigned to Ramose but had been conscripted; however, every officer who supposedly had conscripted him denied that he had. The numerous texts exhorting young men to become scribes rather than soldiers implies that many Egyptians voluntarily decided to join the army.[144] Several of the scribal condemnations of army life describe how a warrior began his training as a child when he was imprisoned in a barracks, where he perhaps acted as a servant of an adult infantryman (one text describes the child as a "retainer of the infantryman").[145] Piye's army consisted partly of "craftsmen, architects, and sailors."[146] Naturally, not everyone was willing to serve in the army. A letter from a scribe to his superior (a scribe of the treasury) noted how one man went missing to avoid being recruited: "I have not seen him (again) until today, on account of the ones who are drafting infantrymen. He ran away from the house of Nebet-Hotep."[147] The actual mustering of troops was done by officers, as recorded in this letter by the standard-bearer Maiseti (from the reign of Seti I) dealing with mustering troops in the area of Lower Egypt, some of whom were not hurrying to join the army.

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[136] *ARE* 3:27.

[137] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 107.

[138] Ibid., 81.

[139] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 401.

[140] Hoffmeier, "Military," 2:404.

[141] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 235 (P.Anast. 5); also Schulman, *Military Rank*, 102, no. 100; a similar text is also found in P.Sallier 1.3, 7–8; P.Beatty 5.5, 6–8. For more on the *mgꜣ* see Schulman, *Military Rank*, 25.

[142] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 105, no. 114; also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 16.

[143] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 125; also "Papyrus Bologna 1086, Year 3," *RITA* 4.Merenptah.46:66; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 105.

> A further matter: Please round up the soldiers [of the army who] are in the villages that are in your vicinity. Mind you, if you let any soldiers of the army tarry in the villages that are in your vicinity, be careful! Keep them occupied with the steeds of the stable masters of the villages until I reach Memphis.… [A further matter: Don't] let any soldiers of the army tarry in your northern districts (?).[148]

3.3.1.2. Hittite

Details about the mustering of native Hittite troops are scarce.[149] Since troops raised from vassals were required to be free men and not slaves, then most likely the same requirement would be true of Hittite troops.[150] It seems that the Hittite standing army consisted mainly of the *šarikuwa*-troops and the UKU.UŠ.[151] One text that refers to the standing army is a letter in which a letter writer (perhaps the king?) commanded Pipappa to bring the "regular troops" (ÉRIN.MEŠ UKU.UŠ) to the writer's current location and incorporate them into the "army" (*tuzzi*-); if he did not do so he would be killed.[152] An oracle question recounts how the troops (*šarikuwa*-troops and the UKU.UŠ) would stay in Hattusa for the winter with the king and not go back to their homes. A small group of soldiers (called the $^{\text{GIŠ}}$TUKUL) might have been paid in land rather than money in return for being ready to go on campaign at any time, a medium state of readiness that would move faster than levying new troops, but evidence for this is minimal.[153]

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[144] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 76–77.

[145] Ibid., 77, 99, no. 91 (P.Anast. 2); also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 51.

[146] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 485.

[147] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 104, no. 108 (P.Anast. 6); also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 282.

[148] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 115 (P.Cairo 58054); also "Mai-Sutekhi, Standard-Bearer" *RITA* 1.Seti I.130:262; for another command to an officer to gather his troops, see Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 211–12.

[149] In addition to the sources in the following footnotes, see the overview in Jürgen Lorenz and Ingo Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," in *Insights into*

The Hittite king could also raise levies for troops to go on campaign, called ERÍN.MEŠ *NĀRĀRI*. The evidence for these troops primarily lies in such places as exemptions given to certain individuals from this levy duty.[154] However, the term does appear in a few other places. In one text (CTH 61.II.7.A) Mursili II said "The standing army (UKU.UŠ) troops, who were with me, were (too) few. So I mobilized the ERÍN.MEŠ *NĀRĀRI*. With the standing army (UKU.UŠ) troops and the ERÍN.MEŠ *NĀRĀRI* I went to Taggašta."[155]

One Hittite king commanded Kassu and Zilapiya to send troops to him immediately. "As soon as this tablet reaches you, quickly—within three days—transfer into the presence of My Majesty the assembled troops (ERÍN.MEŠ) and the chariotry (ANŠE.KUR.RA.ḪI.A) which is with them."[156] Since the three days covers both the mustering and the travel, the

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Hittite History and Archaeology, ed. Hermann Genz and Dirk Paul Mielke, Colloquia Antiqua 2 (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 142–43.

[150] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 41–42.

[151] For more on these troops (the difference between them is unclear), see ibid., 37–55.

[152] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 162 (*HKM* 35; *CTH* 186); for more on the exact meaning of these terms, see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 1–32.

[153] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 55–56; Beal, "The $^{\text{GIŠ}}$TUKUL-Institution in Second Millennium Ḫatti," *AoF* 15 (1988): 269–305.

[154] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 56–71.

[155] Ibid., 59.

[156] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 121–22 (*HKM* 15; *CTH* 186).

mustering must not have taken long. Another letter from the king to Kassu and Pipappa required them to muster 1,760 troops in Šapinuwa within two days.[157]

Hittite literature includes several examples of oaths taken by soldiers and their commanders to follow the Hittite king. The oaths often included rituals symbolizing the punishment that would come upon the soldiers if they broke their oaths: "They parade in front of them a [blind woman] and a deaf man. Whoever does evil to the king (and) the queen, let the oaths seize him! Let them make him blind! Let them [ma]ke him [deaf]! Let them [blind] him like a blind man! Let them [deafen] him like a deaf man! Let them [annihilate him], the man (himself) together with his wife, [his children] (and) his kin!"[158] Since several of the curses refer to land being destroyed, these soldiers are most likely levied troops who would not be full-time soldiers.[159] Similarly, in the Hittite Instruction for the Royal Bodyguard, the royal bodyguards were to pay homage to the Protective God of the Spear before they began their duties guarding the king.[160]

3.3.1.3. Early Mesopotamia

Many records have been found that relate to mustering troops. For example, an Old Babylonian tablet from Ishchali (most likely from the time of Samsu-iluna, the son of Hammurabi) lists a variety of people who have been mustered into the army (specifically, the Marduk and Shamash regiments), including gardeners, merchants, a goat-herder, and a scribe.[161] Although it is for a public works project, Gudea's muster of his people would have resembled raising men for battle.

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[157] Ibid., 132 (*HKM* 20; *CTH* 186).

[158] *ANET*, 354 (*CTH* 427); also COS 1.66:166; other Hittite soldiers' oaths can be found in *COS* 1.67:167–68 (*CTH* 427); Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 194–205, 274–75 (*CTH* 260, 254). For discussions, see Johan de Roos, "Vows Concerning Military Campaigns of Ḫattušiliš III and Tutḫaliaš IV," in *Anatolia Antica: Studi in Memoria Di Fiorella Imparati*, ed. Stefano de Martino and Franca Pecchioli Daddi, Eothen 11 (Florence: LoGisma, 2002), 181–88; Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 63–66.

[159] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 60–62.

[160] *COS* 1.85 (*CTH* 262); Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 104–5; also Hans G. Güterbock and Theo P. J. van den Hout, *The Hittite Instruction for the Royal Bodyguard*, AS 24 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1991), 7.

[161] Samuel Greengus, *Old Babylonian Tablets from Ishchali and Vicinity*, PIHANS 44 (Istanbul: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut, 1979), 72–73, no. 305.

> In those days the ruler imposed a levy on his Land, on his realm … on Ningirsu's Gu-edenna, he imposed a levy. He imposed a levy on his built-up cities, his rural setlements, on Nanše's Gu-gišbarra. There was a levy for him on Ningirsu's "clans" (having the emblem) "Rampant fierce bull that has no one to oppose it" (and) "White cedar passing along(?) for its master," and he placed their magnificent standard "King who makes the mountain tremble" in front of them. There was a levy for her on Nanše's "clans" "both river banks and shores rising from the water, the huge river, abounding in water, whose abundance spreads everywhere," and he placed the "White Swan(?)," Nanše's emblem, in front of it. There was a levy for her on Inanna's "clans," "Snare stretched out for the beasts of the steppe" (and) "Choice steeds, famous team, team beloved by Utu," and he placed the rosette, Inanna's standard, in front of it. In order to build Ningirsu's House.[162]

Most likely, every male could be called up to join the army. One text even records the mustering of a child when he was removed from the register of a weaver: "One (individual named) Ur-Ešhenunka, son of the weaver Geme-kigula, erased from the register, for (becoming) a child-soldier on the orders of Lu-inimnigšaga in the Guʾabba (province)."[163] The texts from Ur III might demonstrate a difference between a standing army (aga$_3$-us$_2$; *rēdû*) and a conscript army (ERIN$_2$; *ṣābum*), called up when needed.[164] The former could have specifically recruited certain men, as illustrated by a text that might indicate something like a signing bonus for joining the army: "6 sheep for Babamu, the day he entered the status of regular soldier."[165]

Many of the Mari letters refer to mustering troops.[166] Yasim-El reported to Zimri-Lim that he had separated the men into three groups and wrote down their names on tablets. The names were divided into the categories of "the men on hand, the troops of the garrisons, the soldiers on furlough, the runaways, and the dead."[167] Kibri-Dagan reported to Zimri-Lim about his enrollment activity.

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[162] RIME 3.1:78, E3/1.1.7.cylA, xiv.7–28; for more on this event, see Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 7.

[163] Ibid., 13 (ITT 5.6795).

[164] Ibid., 8–14.

[165] Ibid., 12 (YBC 15411).

[166] For more on mustering troops at Mari, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 7–11; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 192–93; Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 332–61.

[167] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 348 (ARM 26.408).

> My lord has written to me this about enrolling (*paqādum*) the troops in my district, "Enroll the troops and convey to me a record ('tablet') of these troops for me to hear." This is what my lord wrote to me. I have appointed inspectors, one each for Zurubban, Ḫišamta, Ḫimarran, and Ḫanna. I had them take an oath by Itur-Mer, Dagan, and my lord, and they had the troops registered. I have now registered these tablets separately and I am conveying (them) to my lord. My lord should listen to them: The troops for whom substitutes have gone to Babylon—these remain, but are *recorded* on their own. The troops that were not drafted for a military mission—whether *infirm* or members of the elite—are *recorded* on their own. The elderly who cannot go on a military mission are *recorded* on their own. My lord should hear these tablets and act according to his majesty.[168]

Ishi-Adad requested that his brother Yasmah-Adad levy more troops. "Now if that which Sumu-epuh reported is correct and the Turukkeans are rebelling, (then) go and levy one man per street! Will not 2,000–3,000 troops be marshaled?"[169] Yaqqim-Adad asked about separating different kinds of troops when he was mustering them.

> On the conscription tablet (*ṭuppi tēbibtim*) for the district that I have sent to my lord, *ḫimmum* (ʿ*am* = the people?) is registered. Now if it please my lord, he should consider whether I am to separate the elderly and the male servants who cannot go on a campaign—so as to have them guard the fortification or be assigned to any post my lord designates—from the *piḫrum*-soldiers that I can dispatch (them) according to the dictate of my lord. My lord should decide one way or another.[170]

The timing of enlisting troops was important. Laʾum complained about enlisting troops during the harvest. "Pour ma part, j'ai fait porter une réponse à la tablette du Roi, disant: 'La moisson vient d'arriver et il y a actuellement beaucoup de travaux et mon Seigneur m'écrit d'envoyer à Šubat-Šamaš supplétifs et individuels!'"[171] Shamshi-Adad wrote this letter to his son Yasmah-Adad about enlisting troops.

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[168] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 189 (ARM 3.19 = LAPO 17.563 = Sasson 3.3.a.i.2).

[169] *COS* 4.49:230 (ARM 5.17).

[170] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 189 (ARM 14.70 = LAPO 17.698 = Sasson 3.3.a.i.1).

[171] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 64 (A.687 = LAPO 17.486).

> For a good while now, the troops in your district have not been enrolled. Yet the moment for enrolling is now past. For this reason, you cannot tally the troops (now); so you must tally the troops on your return. Until then, simply provide replacements for the missing and the dead. Make sure to register individually on a tablet the troops that will go with you. The assignment must be correctly done: Put together a unit of 1,000 men from both Suḫu (provinces), a unit of 1,000 men from our Sim'al nomads, and a unit of 500 men from among the (Yaminite) Ubrabu, Yariḫu, Yaḫruru, and Amnanu. Pick up 200 men here, 300 there, as circumstance allows and put together a unit of 500, including your palace servants. A thousand should suffice. On that occasion, you will have put together 5,000 men.[172]

In desperate times, others could be temporarily mustered to help. Ilshu-Nasir equipped several local people to guard the outposts since he lacked any troops (ARM 27.23). Leave could also be revoked in hard times. The governor of Mari, Bahdi-Lim, reported to Zimri-Lim that he was calling back soldiers from furlough due to an attack. “There were soldiers on furlough among the troops. And I alerted as many troops as they (my informers) saw in the cities that they mentioned to me and dispatched (the soldiers on furlough back to their post).”[173] Yamsum also told Zimri-Lim about retrieving the troops on furlough and checking the name list to see who was present and who had run away (ARM 26.314 = Sasson 3.3.a.iv.1a). Interestingly, Zimri-Adad recounts that several soldiers on furlough were staying on rafts. The letter lists the names of fifteen soldiers on furlough who had been recalled (ARM 27.153). Another Mari letter records a disagreement about a tablet listing the troops on furlough not being sent (ARM 27.151).

Yarim-Adad informed Zimri-Lim about a siege set up against the city of Uppi. The letter includes details about the extreme mobilization of troops. “The day I sent this tablet of mine to my lord, Hammu-Rabi has set a total mobilization in his land. He called up troops of (any) merchant, any male, including releasing slaves, and they are ready. And he sent high-ranking servants to Rim-Sin for (the obtaining of) troops. And continuously, every day, his messengers go regularly to Maškan-Šapir."[174] However, mustering troops did not always go smoothly. Evading conscription was punished by death, sometimes even by the death of their family as well: "Whether he is in a secret cave, or in the field or inside a town, destroy that man! Whether he goes up to heaven or down to hell, let nobody see him!"[175] Yaqqim-Adad attempted to muster troops in the Saggaratum district, but encountered difficulties.

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[172] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 191–92 (ARM 1.42 = LAPO 17.448 = Sasson 3.3.a.iii).

[173] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 243 (ARM 26.176 = ARM 6.64 = LAPO 17.620).

> Now I have sent to my lord a tablet containing the names of the men whom I have registered in the census. I had to be severe with the village heads and sergeants and the elders of the district, and had to make them swear a powerful "oath of the gods".… I have not yet made a census of Idiatum, which my lord ordered me to register; and as for registering the men of Amnanum and of Sahru, I have written five times to their village heads, but they won't come.[176]

Slaves were not usually to be enlisted to fulfill a quota. A letter from Bahdi-Lim reported on Yararti-El, who had been enlisted as a soldier but was charged with being a palace slave (ARM 6.40 = LAPO 18 1025 = Sasson 6.1.a.iii.1a). The enemy could also disrupt mustering troops. A letter reported that Babylonian recruiters did not attempt to recruit troops from a village because it was being watched by the enemy.[177]

A census required a massive amount of food due to the large number of men congregated in one location. One text refers to the food needed for "the day of the census."[178] Performing a census was an effective way to gather men for a coup without the king noticing, as was done by Ishar-Lim.[179] Perhaps to prevent such coups, copies of the census were heavily guarded. "I opened the tablet room which was sealed with your seal, and both Mukannishum and Ṭabat-sharrussu were standing there. Igmil-lum showed them which were the boxes that they needed, and then they brought out, with their own hands, the boxes containing all the census tablets."[180]

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[174] Ibid., 319 (ARM 26.363 = Sasson 3.3.a.ii.1).

[175] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 144 (ARM 13.108 = LAPO 18.1080 = Sasson 2.1.a.iv.2.note).

[176] Ibid., 142 (ARM 14.64 = LAPO 17.560 = Sasson 2.1.a.iv.2).

[177] *AbB* 10.150, summarized in Seth F. C. Richardson, "Mesopotamia and the 'New' Military History," in Brice, *Recent Directions in the Military History*, 28.

[178] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 142 (A.926).

[179] Ibid., 143.

A letter from Yaqqim-Adad noted that one particular call for troops was for only ten days per month (ARM 14.48 = LAPO 17.651 = Sasson 1.3.d.v.2). Shaknum, the commander of a garrison, reported to Zimri-Lim about a group of soldiers who had been ordered to stay in Haya-Sumu for three months, but now their time was fulfilled and they wanted to leave (ARM 26.350 = Sasson 1.3.c.ii.1a). Another letter from him to Zimri-Lim recorded that the king had promised to send replacements, but they still had not arrived (ARM 26.353). Ibal-pi-El wrote to Hammurabi to request that he send his troops home for the winter. "Now that the god has destroyed the enemy and cold days have arrived, why do you retain the servants of your brother [Zimri-Lim]? Give me an order so that I could leave and in order for the *rēdû*-officers to reach their homes before the winter season."[181] A letter from Yasmah-Adad to his father shows that soldiers of different backgrounds were treated differently.

> Take 400 able-bodied men from the Ḫaneens which you intended to tally in order to place them at the disposal of the palace. 200 of these soldiers, one company, should come from well-to-do families, and 200 soldiers, another company, should come from poor folk. I myself will give good positions in the palace to the poor men, while the well-to-do men will be provided for in their paternal homes.[182]

The details of the process are unclear, but mobilizing for military service seems to be related in some way to the *ilku*-system, which obligated service for state. It appears that *ilku* was usually based on land tenure, it could be fulfilled with military service, and it might have been for only a limited time period.[183] Some documents indicate that a substitute (including perhaps a slave) could be hired to take one's place in military service.[184]

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[180] Ibid., 143 (ARM 10.82 = LAPO 18.1205 = Sasson 2.2.c.i).

[181] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 49 (ARM 2.24+ = LAPO 17.586 = Sasson 3.6.b.i).

[182] Ibid., 24 (ARM 2.1 = LAPO 17.645 = Sasson 6.1.b.i).

[183] J. N. Postgate, *Bronze Age Bureaucracy: Writing and Practice of Government in Assyria* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 22; Postgate, "Land Tenure in the Middle Assyrian Period: A Reconstruction," in *The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur: Studies on Assyria, 1971–2005* (Oxford: Oxbow, 2007), 2–26.

[184] See *KAJ* 307 and MARV 4.5 in Postgate, *Bronze Age Bureaucracy*, 23–25.

In Babylon, the code of Hammurabi prohibited selling family property (presumably so as to avoid *ilkum* service), but several contracts indicate that at least some hired substitutes for their place.[185] Ishme-Dagan, the king of Isin, recorded how he treated the people of Nippur kindly when he "relieved its men of military service."[186]

The author of a short letter from Nuzi told how Kurpa-zah was at home doing *ilku*-service, while his brothers were among the chariot troops. This might imply a contrast between the two: soldiers did not need to perform *ilku*.[187] A fragmentary document from Nuzi records that a group of charioteers were not required to perform their *ilku*-duty.[188] However, an adoption certificate from Nuzi includes the provision that Belaya, a charioteer, must perform *ilku*-duty and his new adopted son must continue that obligation.[189]

3.3.1.4. Assyrian

The massive Assyrian army (at least under the last four major Assyrian kings) had two major sections: standing forces, called the *kiṣir šarri* ("the corps of the king") or the *kiṣir šarrūtiya* ("the corps of my majesty"), and the provincial troops.[190] As will be noted in the following section, sometimes foreign troops were added directly to the standing army.[191] The Fort Shalmaneser texts refer to an Assyrian unit ([K]UR *a*[*š-šu*]*r-a-a*), which was a unit made up of Assyrians (the entire land of Assyria, as indicated by KUR, rather than just the city of Assur).[192] The provincial troops were under the direct control of various high officials, who sometimes even referred to them as "my" soldiers.[193] For example, one receipt records the loan of fifty cavalrymen to the governor of Parsua during the reign of Sargon II (SAA 6.25).

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[185] J. N. Postgate, *Early Mesopotamia: Society and Economy at the Dawn of History* (London: Routledge, 1992), 243.

[186] RIME 4:32, E4.1.4.5, 5–11.

[187] Maynard P. Maidman, *Nuzi Texts and Their Use as Historical Evidence*, WAW 18 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2010), 170 (JEN 5.498).

[188] Ibid., 175 (EN 10/2).

[189] Ibid., 197 (HSS V, 57). Belaya is identified as a charioteer in another text (ibid., 222).

[190] Raija Mattila, *King's Magnates: A Study of the Highest Officials of the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, SAAS 11 (Finland: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2000), 149; for a chart showing the military status of various parts of these armies, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 13.

[191] For a chart, see Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 151.

[192] Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 36, 225–26 (111, obv. 21′).

The armies appear to have been composed of three different groups of Assyrians: the professional soldiers, semiprofessional soldiers, and nonprofessional soldiers (though the lines between these groups were very fluid).[194] The most important soldiers were professionals who served permanently in the army (standing armies). Semiprofessional soldiers were employed in other ways beside the army. Some were reserves and were paid for their service in land, in return for being available to serve and mobilize quickly. The reserves (*ša kutalli*) were to be prepared to take up their martial duty if the need arose (SAA 1.91; 1.99; 19.84). ND 453 describes a payment that might have been for the reserves; if they were activated they would most likely have become "the king's men" (*ṣāb šarri*).[195] It appears that the wealthy (especially government officials who played important roles in the state) could hire others to take their spot among the *ṣāb šarri*.[196] Finally, for large campaigns Assyrians could be temporarily recruited into the army. Sargon II had granted freedom to the people of Assur from "the (arms-)muster of the land" (*di-ku-ut māti*) in the Assur charter, implying that otherwise they would be liable to be conscripted into the military.[197] Other Assyrian kings likewise give exemptions from military conscription (see, e.g., SAA 12.25; 12.26; 12.35; 12.36; 12.39; 12.40).

A few of the letters refer to mobilizing troops for battle.[198] A letter from Sargon II referred to Sharru-emuranni mobilizing (*dekû*) the troops of Dur-Ladini, Dur-Bilihai, and Larak to come to Assyria, but the letter is unclear whether this mobilization is for building or military purposes, though the rest of the letter refers to strengthening defenses (SAA 1.18). A letter to the king reported that Bel-ipush and Bel-bullit had not mobilized

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[193] For a list of these high officials and references to "their" troops, see Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 150.

[194] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 9–11.

[195] J. N. Postgate, *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire*, StPohlSM 1 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1974), 223–24, 369.

[196] Ibid., 87, 241–42.

[197] H. W. F. Saggs, "Historical Texts and Fragments of Sargon II of Assyria: 1. The 'Assur Charter,'" *Iraq* 37 (1975): 16–17.

[198] For a brief survey of several of these references, see Frederick Mario Fales, "Preparing for War in Assyria," in *Économie antique: La guerre dans les économies antiques*, ed. Jean Andreau, Pierre Briant, and Raymond Descat, EAH 5 (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: Musée archéologique départemental, 2000), 38–40.

(*dekû*) archers (SAA 18.54). The easiest way to muster troops for a campaign was to move already mustered troops to another location. Naturally, the problem with this practice was that it left the original location weakened. Reflecting this problem, an official complained to Sargon II about an order to send some of his troops elsewhere. "Further, the legate of Der has written to me: 'Send me 2,000 men!' But the men from here do not suffice (even) for the fortresses! Whence should I take the men to send to him?" (SAA 15.142).

Although details about mustering troops remain vague, the tablets from Fort Shalmaneser are most likely records from the mustering of troops.[199] The frequent erasures on some of these tablets might indicate that they were written in the midst of the muster, though some of them are more carefully composed.[200] On some tablets marks next to the names of the men indicated whether they were present or not, illustrating how they might have been used.[201] While these tablets (which date to the thirteenth month of the year) might have been for the purpose of mustering troops to go on campaign, they are from the wrong time of the year (as noted in §3.4.1.4, troops usually went on campaign in the beginning of summer).[202] More likely, these tablets refer to annual inventory checks. A text from Esarhaddon also notes that annual checks were made during the month of the New Year's Festival.[203]

Mustering troops was the responsibility of a variety of officers. In a letter to Sargon II, the governor Mannu-ki-Ninua requested a bodyguard to go with a scribe and recruitment officer (*mušarkisu*) when they went to gather their men. The same letter refers to trainees (*tarbû*) being placed under the control of the recruitment officers (SAA 15.105).[204] In a letter to Sargon II, an official provided more detail about the mustering process when he claimed that his major-domo could muster all his troops within three days (SAA 5.67). Elsewhere, Sargon II ordered a subordinate to muster a cavalry unit; those who were late would face a dire penalty.

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[199] Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 141 (no. 85), 167–235 (nos. 98–118).

[200] Ibid., 20.

[201] E.g., see tablet 101 in ibid., 182–88.

[202] Ibid., 21.

[203] RINAP 4.1:25, vi.54–64; SAA 1.48 might also refer to such an annual review in the last month of the year.

[204] For another reference to a *mušarkisu* mustering troops, see SAA 1.48; however, most references to these officers do not include the idea of mustering; *CAD* describes them as "an official connected with the mounted guard" (*CAD* 10.2, s.v. mušarkisu). One letter describes them as acquiring grain for horses (SAA 5.119). For more on these officers, see Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 28–31;

> Get together your prefects plus the h[orses] of your cavalry collection points immediately! Whoever is late will be impaled in the middle of his house, and who(ever) changes the [… of] the city will also be impaled in the middle of his house, and his sons and daughters will be slaughtered by his (own) order. Don't delay; leave your business and come straight away! (SAA 1.22)

However, entrusting these officers with the power to muster troops did not always go according to plan. Sargon II accused the governor Mannu-ki-Adad of taking people entrusted to him and mustering them into his own personal army. The king commanded him to recall all these men from their errands so they would be present when the eunuch came to review the troops.

> 1,119 able-bodied men—all together they were 5,000 persons, those of them who have died, and those who are alive are alive—were given to the exempts of the Palace and entrusted as charges to your care. So why are you appropriating them, turning some to recruits, others to chariot-men, and others again to cavalrymen, into your own troops?
>
> Have you not said to yourself: "When the time comes for me to summon them, to whose house shall I go for help?"
>
> I am writing to you right now: You have sent many of them to the south and to the north or wherever on (various) errands; summon them wherever they are, they must be there before my eunuch arrives. I shall now send my eunuch to make a review of them. (SAA 1.11)

Mustering for large campaigns would most likely have happened in the large cities. One natural place to gather would have been an armory such as that described by Esarhaddon, who rebuilt his armory (É.GAL *mašarti*) when he deemed the old one to be too small. He describes its use in these terms.

Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 36–37; SAA 18.183 refers to a recruitment officer being killed and his clothes stolen.

> At that time, the armory of Nineveh which the kings who came before (me), my ancestors, had built to maintain the camp (and) to keep thoroughbreds, mules, chariots, military equipment, implements of war, and the plunder of enemies, everything that the god Aššur, king of the gods, gave me as my royal share—that place had become too small for me to have horses show their mettle (and) to train with chariots.[205]

Numbering the troops must have happened during campaigns as well. During his eighth campaign while already in the middle of his march to Urartu, Sargon II said that he inspected his troops and counted the chariots and horses in Sumbi.[206] Some evidence has remained that all Assyrians took loyalty oaths to the Assyrian king, though the limited evidence means that this happened only on rare occasions. Scholars have debated the translation of the Akkadian word *adê* as either treaty or loyalty oath.[207] In some cases native Assyrians are said to enter into an *adê*. For example, in SAA 10.6 (*LAS* 1) scribes are available to enter into an *adê*, and various other kinds of scholars also enter into an *adê* in SAA 10.7 (*LAS* 2). The presence of a copy of the Esarhaddon Succession Treaty in Tayinat shows that, at least for this document, entering into it was for large portions of the empire, not just vassal kings.[208]

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[205] 205. RINAP 4.1:22–23, v.40–47; during the time of Sargon II it appears that there were three administrative centers for the equestrian troops: the Review Palace and the Northwest Palace in Kalhu and the city of Assur; see Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 43.

[206] 206. *COS* 4.42:199; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 791.

[207] 207. For recent summaries of the discussion, see Jacob Lauinger, "The Neo-Assyrian *adê*: Treaty, Oath, or Something Else?," *ZABR* 19 (2013): 99–115; Frederick Mario Fales, "After Ta'yinat: The New Status of Esarhaddon's *adê* for Assyrian Political History," *RA* 106 (2012): 133–58; Simonetta Ponchia, "The Neo-Assyrian *adê* Protocol and the Administration of the Empire," in *From Source to History: Studies on Ancient Near Eastern World and Beyond Dedicated to Giovanni Battista Lanfranchi on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday on June 23, 2014*, ed. Salvatore Gaspa et al., AOAT 412 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2014), 501–25.

[208] 208. Jacob Lauinger, "Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty at Tell Tayinat: Text and Commentary," *JCS* 64 (2012): 87–123; Ponchia, "Neo-Assyrian *adê* Protocol," 510–23. For other examples of Assyrians entering into the *adê*, see Lauinger, "Neo-Assyrian *adê*," 103–5; Fales estimates that two hundred copies of the document would have been made with various groups; see Fales, "After Ta'yinat," 148.

3.3.1.5. Later Empires

Not many texts remain to give us a picture of how the Neo-Babylonians recruited troops.[209] Several texts indicate that the temples supplied troops, especially archers, perhaps in exchange for working land.[210] An archival temple text from Sippar records a list of shepherds who were mustered: "Shepherds of the flocks of Šamaš who have been assigned to bow-service."[211] Military manpower might also have been raised from fiefs and the general citizenry.[212]

According to Herodotus, the Persians viewed mobilization seriously: when a Persian asked Darius to exempt one of his three sons from going to battle, Darius commanded that all three of his sons be killed (*Hist.* 4.84). The Persians enlisted many of their troops from Persians who lived on land given to them by the government in return for military service. Many Persians lived on land in foreign countries (such as Egypt and Asia Minor) and were likewise required to provide military support when called. Briant summarizes the responsibility of those called up:

> Several documents from the reign of Darius show that, when a tenant farmer received royal orders, he had to set out, fully armed and provided with supplies and money; in other words, it was the soldier himself who paid for his weapons and his upkeep. The cost was great: in 513, a horseman was called up for three years; he had to bring with him a mule (purchased for 50 siculi), whose feed cost him 36 siculi, as well as 12 lightly armed men, who provided their own equipment.[213]

3.3.1.6. West Semitic

A limited number of administrative documents record the mobilization of a militia to fight for Ugarit, largely drawn from the villages around Ugarit and numbering around a thousand men.[214] The Kirta epic includes a reference to an extreme mustering of troops. In the middle of Kirta's grief at losing his children, El commanded him to raise an army that did not permit any exemptions.

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[209] For a brief discussion, see Joannés, "Guerre et économie dans l'Empire néo-babylonien," 66–67.

[210] John MacGinnis, "Mobilisation and Militarisation in the Neo-Babylonian Empire," in Vidal, *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East*, 157–58; MacGinnis, *The Arrows of the Sun: Armed Forces in Sippar in the First Millennium BC*, BabAr 4 (Dresden: ISLET, 2012), 5–6, 21–29.

[211] MacGinnis, *Arrows of the Sun*, 55 (BM 67462).

[212] MacGinnis, "Mobilisation and Militarisation," 158–59.

[213] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 405.

> Then let the army, supplied (?), go forth,
> The host of hosts, supplied (?)
> Then let the escorting (?) army go forth,
> Let your host be a very large force,
> As many as three hundred myriads!
> Soldiers beyond number,
> Archers beyond count!
> They'll march by the thousand, in rows,
> In myriads, by rank arrayed.
> After two, two will march;
> After three, all of them.
> The sole survivor'll shut his house.
> The widow'll hire on for a fee.
> Even the ill will be carried in bed.
> Even the blind will blink his way.
> The new-wed groom will go forth;
> To another man he'll drive his wife;
> To a stranger, his own true love.[215]

The exact means of mustering troops in Israel is not usually recorded. For example, Rehoboam "assembled" (קהל, *hiphil*) a large force to fight the rebellious northern tribes (1 Kgs 12:21). Ben-Hadad gathered (קבץ) his army together (1 Kgs 20:1). In response, Ahab "mustered" (פקד) his troops (1 Kgs 20:15), as Ben-Hadad did in a following battle (1 Kgs 20:26). Details about the Israelite army are unclear, but according to one text Solomon recruited his own people as his soldiers because they were not his slaves (1 Kgs 9:22). Jehoram is said once to muster all Israel (2 Kgs 3:6). When Mesha was attacked by Israel, he mustered a large number of troops by mustering all who could put on armor, regardless of their age (2 Kgs 3:21). Outside the book of Kings, censuses were most likely related to mustering troops for battle (Num 1; 2 Sam 24). Deuteronomic law allowed for certain exemptions to be granted for those who had recently dedicated a house, planted a vineyard, or married, as well as for those who were afraid (Deut 20:5–8; 24:5).[216] An extreme version of this winnowing of troops for battle was connected with the story of Gideon, where those were afraid and those who knelt down to drink water were sent home (Judg 7:2–8).

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[214] Jordi Vidal, "Military Conscription in Ugarit," *HiMA* 3 (2016): 123–34.

[215] Edward L. Greenstein, "Kirta," in Parker, *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 15 (*KTU* 1.14.i.32–50); also *COS* 1.102:334; *ANET*, 143–44.

3.3.2. Hiring Foreign Troops

> Replace the enemy's flags and banners with your own, mix the captured chariots with yours, and mount them.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 2.18

Armies often employed troops from other nations to supplement their own armies. Although the word "mercenary" is often used to describe these troops, it is most likely inappropriate since most were not free to leave and go elsewhere.[217] Most of these foreign troops were conquered armies who were forced to serve in the army of those who had defeated them in battle. However, they often eventually assimilated into the culture that had conquered them.

3.3.2.1. Egyptian

Throughout the Old and Middle Kingdom the Egyptian army employed foreigners in their army, especially Nubians.[218] Weni said that the pharaoh put together an army of "many tens of thousands, from all of Upper Egypt, from Elephantine north to Medenyt, from Lower Egypt, from all the Delta, (15) from Sedjer, Khensedjer, from Irtjet Nubians, Medjay-Nubians, Iam-Nubians, (16) Wawat-Nubians, Kaau-Nubians and from the Tjemehu."[219] A picture in the tomb of the general Intef (Thebes 386) from the Eleventh Dynasty depicts several Nubian archers mixed into the Egyptian army attacking a city.[220] The Middle Kingdom tomb of Mesehti contained models of Nubian archers.[221]

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[216] For a discussion of these exemptions, see W. M. de Bruin, "Die Freistellung vom Militärdienst in Deut. xx 5–7: Die Gattung der Wirkungslosigkeitssprüche als Schlüssel zum Verstehen eines alten Brauches," *VT* 49 (1999): 21–33.

[217] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 7–8.

[218] García, "War in Old Kingdom Egypt," 26–29; Andrea M. Gnirs, "Ancient Egypt," in Raaflaub, *War and Society in the Ancient and Medieval Worlds*, 80–83.

[219] Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 354.

This use of foreign troops expanded greatly in the New Kingdom as the Egyptians added many foreigners into the army, including "the Sherden, the Nehesi, the Kehek, the Meshwesh, the Tjuk, 'South Palestinians,' Philistines and Syrians."[222] Papyrus Anastasi I refers to an army of five thousand men that includes many foreign troops, including 520 Sherden, 1,600 Kehek, [100] Meshwesh and 880 Nubians.[223] Several of the Canaanite kings wrote in the Amarna letters to request Nubian troops from Egypt to help them (EA 127, 131).

The Egyptians during the New Kingdom apparently brought many foreign troops into the Egyptian army as distinct units, which had lower-level officers from the same nationality, but with Egyptian officers at higher levels. However, sometimes foreign troops were added to already existing units. The foreign troops usually served as infantry rather than chariotry, though the Sherden were an exception, as well as the *maryannu* warriors taken by Thutmose III, who were elite chariot warriors.[224] Ramesses III also said that enemy captives were "made shield-bearers, charioteers, and retainers who bear the fan while following the king."[225] Foreign troops apparently could stay in their own areas (with weapons stored in government arsenals) during times of peace.[226] "I made the infantry and chariotry to dwell (at home) in my time; the Sherden and Kehek were in their towns, lying the length of their backs; they had no fear, (for) there was no enemy from Kush, (nor) foe from Syria. Their bows and their weapons reposed in their magazines, while they were satisfied and drunk with joy."[227]

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[220] Schulman, "Battle Scenes of the Middle Kingdom," 169; Carola Vogel, *The Fortifications of Ancient Egypt 3000–1780 BC*, Fortress 98 (Oxford: Osprey, 2010), 56–57.

[221] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 44–45; the archers from the Mesehti tomb are in the Cairo Egyptian Museum; for a picture, see *ANEP*, 55, no. 179.

[222] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 23; for more on the hiring of foreign troops in New Kingdom Egypt, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 7–8.

[223] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 106.

[224] *COS* 2.2A:12.

[225] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 123.

[226] Ibid., 22–24, 264–65.

[227] *ARE* 4:205 (P.Harris); also Pierre Grandet, *Le Papyrus Harris I (BM 9999)* (Cairo: Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale, 1994), 1:339.

In the record of the battle of Qadesh (in the Poem), Ramesses II enlisted the Sherden warriors into his army after he conquered them.[228] The Sherden warriors are characterized in the reliefs of Ramesses II by circular shields, swords, and horned helmets.[229] Ramesses II noted that he immediately organized captives to serve in his army: "The captives of my valiant sword were made into companies at once. The army was made to be their companions."[230] Ramesses III wrote that he conquered the Sherden and the Weshesh and "settled them in strongholds, bound in my name."[231] Papyrus Harris I refers to branding foreign troops entering the army: "I settled their leaders in strongholds bearing my name, I added to them chief bowmen and great ones of tribes, branded and made into slaves (*ḥmw*), stamped with my name—their wives and children being treated likewise."[232] A scribal satire about the soldier's life in P.Anast. 5 refers to prisoners being branded when they became attendants of the army.[233] A relief from Medinet Habu illustrates how this branding might have been conducted (fig. 3.3).[234]

Hans Goedicke has suggested that two texts illustrate a code that foreign troops swore to uphold as they joined the Egyptian army.[235] First, in the inscription of Weni he said that his leadership had the following result: "so that no one attacked his companion, so that no one took bread or sandals from the traveler, so that no one took cloth from any town, so that no one took a goat from any man."[236] Second, a treasurer at the end

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[228] *COS* 2.5A:33; *RITA* 2.3:3.

[229] For reliefs depicting the Sherden, see *ANEP*, 19, no. 59; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 4; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:19; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 283.

[230] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 116 (Luxor 646).

[231] *ARE 4:*201.

[232] Abd El-Mohsen Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt*, 2nd ed., ASAESup 18 (Cairo: L'Organisation Égyptienne Generale du Livre, 1978), 110 (P.Harris 1.77.4–6); also *ARE* 4:202; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 123, no. 234; Grandet, *Papyrus Harris*, 1:337.

[233] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 230.

[234] Harold H. Nelson, "The Epigraphic Survey of the Great Temple of Medient Habu (Seasons 1924–25 to 1927–28)," in *Medinet Habu 1924–28*, OIC 5 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1929), 34.

[235] Hans Goedicke, "The Rules of Conduct for Egyptian Military," *WZKM* 88 (1998): 116–28.

[236] Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 354.

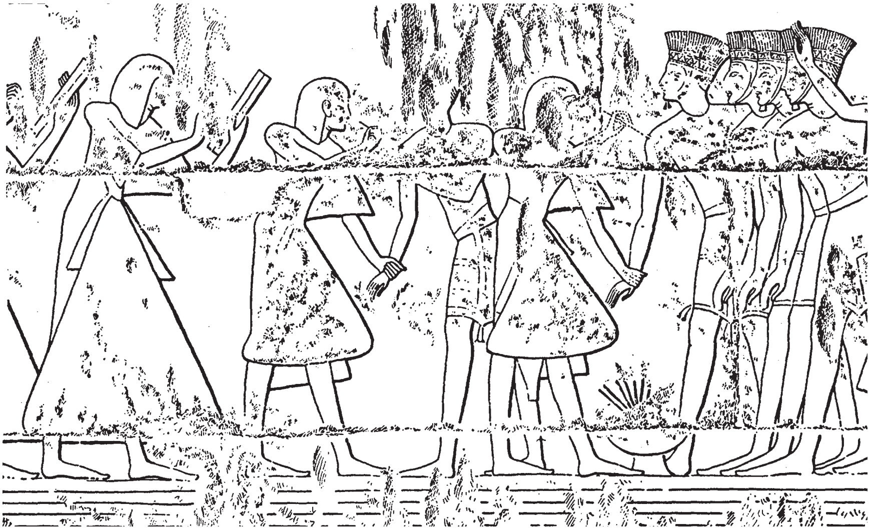

Fig. 3.3. Branding prisoners. Drawing from Harold H. Nelson, "The Epigraphic Survey of the Great Temple of Medinet Habu," fig. 25. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

of the Tenth Dynasty recorded that he demanded the following declarations of his soldiers: "I shall not pilfer, I shall not steal his property, I shall not spend a night in the field when one comes for me, I shall not lust for a man's wife, I shall not desire to love a boy."[237]

Later in Egyptian history, archaeological evidence indicates that most likely Greek troops fought with Neco against Babylon and Psamtik I enlisted Greeks to help him strengthen his hold on the country.[238] A Greek inscription (on an older statue of Ramesses II) at Abu Simbel recorded that in a campaign to Kush in 593 (during the reign of Psamtik II) the Egyptian troops and the foreign troops were led by different commanders.[239]

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[237] Goedicke, "Rules of Conduct for Egyptian Military," 124.

[238] Neco: Benjamin M. Sullivan, "Paying Archaic Greek Mercenaries: Views from Egypt and the Near East," *CJ* 107 (2011): 50–51; Psamtik I: ibid., 44.

[239] Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 640; for more on these mercenaries, see Simona Rodan, *Aegean Mercenaries in Light of the Bible: Clash of Cultures in the Story of David and Goliath* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2015), 4–9.

3.3.2.2. Hittite

The Hittites employed a variety of ways of enlisting foreign troops.[240] They frequently required their vassal kings to march to war with them. Tudhaliya II commanded Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna that "if any city in the land of His Majesty begins war—as it is His Majesty's enemy, it will likewise be Sunashshura's—they will fight side by side."[241] Another part of the treaty includes a similar provision. "If a serious threat arises against His Majesty, and the enemy enters his land in force—if the land of Sunashshura is spared, you, Sunashshura, come together with your military levies to my aid. If you are busy with some matter, send your son at the head of your military levies. Come to my aid!"[242] The treaty also specified that any spoil gained as a result of these battles by the vassal king would be kept by the vassal, further ensuring that the vassals would support the Hittite king. Based on references to "the troops of…," it appears that troops were often grouped together in geographical units.[243] Ramesses II faulted the Hittite king for spending all his money to hire other nations to fight with him against the Egyptians.[244]

The Hittites also sometimes required vassal kings to supply troops who would become part of the Hittite army. A treaty between Tudhaliya II and Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna included the following clauses. "If some land begins war against His Majesty, that land is covered by Sunashshura's oath. His Majesty will request military assistance from Sunashshura, and Sunashshur must provide it to him. If Sunashshura provides troops and says: 'Lead them out against the enemy,' His Majesty may lead them out. If he does not say this, they will remain on guard in his land."[245] In another treaty Arnuwanda I of Hatti ordered the men of Ismerika to supply a certain number of troops to fight with his army. This was a common clause in Hittite treaties, and many other examples could be given.

> In regard to your troops for the standing army—formerly one hundred fifty soldiers from the land of Ismerika reported regularly, but now I have

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[240] For more on this, see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 117–27.

[241] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 21 (*CTH* 41; 131).

[242] Ibid., 21–22 (*CTH* 41; 131).

[243] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 71–91.

[244] *COS* 2.5A:33–34; "The Poem, *or* Literary Record," *RITA* 2.3A:4.

[245] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 21 (*CTH* 41; 131).

> made [a revised requirement] for you. Sixty of your regular soldiers shall be available. Only free men who […] shall march. No servant or hired substitute shall report to the standing army. [This shall be placed] under oath. But even when the land becomes populous, the requirement will remain in effect concerning the troops for the standing army. In whatever unit of the standing army a servant or a hired substitute [is discovered]—it will be counted against you, the men of Ismerika, as an offense.[246]

A draft of a treaty with the Kaska prohibited them from sending a slave in their place when called to battle (the name of the Hittite king is unknown). "Now, thereon: As soon as I, the Sun-king, muster the troops, and a man is [not] willing to [come], a man's slave should not come (instead). [Only] the man (himself) shall come! On whatever campaign (affecting) you the [Sun-king goes—now], if the Sun-king goes homeward from the (battle) field, (then) will the troops be sent home."[247]

Ashapala (who might have been a town commander) swore an oath to provide troops for the Hittite king. "We will not hold to [*the enemy*] as opposed to [Ḫa]ttusa, and we will provide [these troops for] His Majesty: 10 troops [from] the town of Tapap[anuwa], 10 troops from the town of Tapapaḫsu, 10 troops [from] the town of Tiya[ssilta]; altogether 30 troops, which [will] come to Ḫattusa."[248] In his annals Mursili II recorded several examples of enlisting foreign troops into his army. In his first year, the Kaska began to supply him with troops again after he defeated their rebellion, while in his second year the district of Tipiya expressed their hostility by no longer sending him troops.[249] On one occasion a Hittite king removed the obligation to provide troops: as part of an attempt to encourage loyalty, Hattusili III reduced the number of men that Ulmi-Teshub was required to send.[250] Few texts refer to prisoners of war becoming part of the army.[251] Tudhaliya II defeated Assuwa and took a large contingent of their troops to Hattusa, but they later rebelled.[252] Several texts refer to enemy captives who were blinded. Since the oath for service included the curse of blindness for rebellion, it is possible that these were soldiers who had defected.[253]

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[246] Ibid., 16 (*CTH* 133); see also *TLC* 1:351–53.

[247] *TLC* 1:1043 (*CTH* 138.1).

[248] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 243 (*CTH* 270).

[249] *COS* 2.16:84 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[250] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 108–9 (*CTH* 97); for historical background, see Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 271.

[251] See Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 42–43.

[252] For the story, see Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 95.

3.3.2.3. Early Mesopotamia

Hiring foreign troops was common throughout early Mesopotamia. Sometimes, this was viewed negatively; En-metena describes several hostile actions of his enemy Ur-LUM-ma, the king of Gisha (Umma), including that "He hired the (people) of the foreign lands (as mercenaries)."[254] An Old Babylonian treaty (dating to about 1800) between two kings near Eshnunna included the provision that the two would not recruit troops belonging to the other. "A soldier of Sumu-numḫim Ammi-dushur shall not enlist. A soldier of Ammi-dushur Samu-numhim shall not enlist."[255]

However, more often it was viewed as morally neutral. A letter from Zimri-Lim to Hatnu-rapi proposed a coordinated attack on a mutual enemy, proposing they kill donkey foals to validate the treaty.[256] More often unequal treaties included the provision that the subordinate would send troops to support the more powerful member in battle. A treaty between Mutija and Hazip-Teshub his vassal (the treaty comes from Tell Leilan in northern Syria in the eighteenth century) included provisions for the vassal to support Mutija in battle.

> When Mutija, son of Halun-pî-(ju)mu, king of the country of Apum, has sent for auxiliaries, on that very day my elite troops and a trusted commander for my troops I shall send! I shall have no objections; I shall not say: "My troops are not available!" To my troops and the commander of my troops I shall not say as follows: "When the troops of Mutija [son] of Halun- pî-(ju)mu, king of the country of Apum, to the front of his enemy has approached to do battle, [*in words*] of disobedience decamp, and Mutija and his troops will be killed!" (Thus) I will not order, I will not have ordered, I will not instruct, I will not [send words], and (by)

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[253] Ibid.

[254] RIME 1:197, E1.9.5.1, iii.1; for a similar claim about the impropriety of hiring foreigners, see also RIME 1:172, E1.9.4.2, vii.7–viii.1.

[255] Greengus, *Old Babylonian Tablets*, 77; also *TLC* 1:207.

[256] Stephanie Dalley, C. B. F. Walker, and J. D. Hawkins, *The Old Babylonian Tablets from Tell Al Rimah* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 1976), 13, no. 1.

> letter I will not send words! Thus I will [instruct] them as follows: [“Like] your own lives, […][257]

Administrative records throughout early Mesopotamia reveal the presence of foreign troops. A late Old Babylonian text records foreign troops serving in the Babylonian military.[258] Zakira-Hammu reported to Zimri-Lim that two thousand Zalmaeqan troops had arrived in the city of Qattunan and were heading out to Zimri-Lim’s location (ARM 27.78). An administrative document from Nuzi lists the foreign troops from Ḫanigalbat (Mitanni) stationed in a garrison in Apena, a town that belonged to Arrapha.[259]

Sometimes the politics related to including foreign troops in one’s army proved difficult. Hammurabi ordered that foreign troops be mixed together, presumably to reduce the chance of rebellion and negative morale.[260] Ibal-pi-El wrote to Zimri-Lim about the troops of Mari fighting under Hammurabi who desired to return home because of the onset of winter, but were prevented from doing so by Hammurabi (ARM 2.24+ = LAPO 17.586 = Sasson 3.6.b.i). In a prophecy Shamash demanded the payment of an ally, Nergal, the king of Hubshalum, who fought with Zimri-Lim (part of the payment was to be a large bronze sword).[261] Many prisoners became troops for those who captured them.[262] The Hana might have been mercenaries employed by Mari to fight their enemies.[263] Shamshi-Adad instructed his son Yasmah-Adad to hire Bedouin. “Fais équiper … une troupe de 100 Bédouins et expédie-la à Qaṭna avec Zimru-Ila. Cette troupe sera en garnison à Qaṭna et s’adjoindra à celle de Sûmû-nêhim.”[264]

Enforcing the arrival of foreign troops into the army was not always simple. Kibri-Dagan, governor of Terqa, threatened to kill an entire group of sheikhs from Yaminite villages if any of them were missing summoned troops. Further, anyone caught planning on running away would be thrown into prison (ARM 2.92 = LAPO 17.681 = Sasson 3.3.a.ii.3a). Another letter describes a forceful way to convince the troops to gather for battle after Zimri-Lim had commanded Bahdi-Lim to gather troops for a campaign.

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[257] Eidem, *Royal Archives from Tell Leilan*, 379–80.

[258] Seth F. C. Richardson, *Texts from the Late Old Babylonian Period*, JCSSup 2 (Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2010), 29–31, no. 44 (BM 80555).

[259] Maidman, *Nuzi Texts and Their Use as Historical Evidence*, 68–70.

[260] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 512 (A.4515).

[261] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 24–25 (ARM 26.194 = Sasson 5.5.c.i).

[262] For examples after the defeat of Nineveh, see N. Ziegler, “The Conquest of the Holy City of Nineveh and the Kingdom of Nurrugûm by Samsî-Addu,” *Iraq* 56 (2004): 23.

[263] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 194; Sullivan, “Paying Archaic Greek Mercenaries,” 38–39; Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 582–83.

[264] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 34 (ARM 2.5 = LAPO 17.460).

> Five days since the appointed time (that) I wait for the Ḫanean-nomads but the troop does not gather together. The Ḫanean-nomads arrived from the pastureland but dwell in the midst of towns. Once, twice to the midst of towns I have sent so that they may be levied but they didn't gather together. And if in three days they (still) don't get together, now, if my lord agrees let them execute a criminal in the workhouse, let them cut his head off and between the towns, up to Ḫudnum and Appān, let them tour in order that the troops may become fearful and quickly gather here (so that) according to the urgent order which my lord gave me, rapidly the military campaign I may expedite.[265]

A letter from Bahdi-Lim refers to a quota of troops that a group needed to raise. The king commanded the sheikhs to raise a thousand men, but they had only given eight hundred men. The sheiks defended themselves by claiming that there were not another two hundred men to give and that the guilty sheikh should be summoned to answer for his lack.

> In following what my lord wrote to me, I gathered the sheiks, appraised them of the situation, talking to them in detail; but they could not answer me satisfactorily. They said, "We have given 800 men; there are no 1,000 men to give." This is what they answered me, (adding), "Our lord should summon the guilty (sheik)." I have had a register made of the troops in arrear and will direct to my lord the registers of arrear as well as the sheiks. I will send off the 800 men I have already equipped. None will be retained. The army will be on its way today.[266]

In a letter to his son, Shamshi-Adad included instructions for gathering troops from the Yaminites based on urging local leaders (*sugāgūtum*) to fulfill their census oaths. He instructed his son not to enroll them, but to give them "a tough decree," which is as follows: "The king is going on campaign. Let the whole (count) be absolutely complete, down to the youngest boy. Any *sugāgum* whose (drafted) troop is not complete, and who leaves one man behind—he has taken the loyalty oath."[267]

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[265] Daniel Bodi, "The Story of Samuel, Saul, and David," in *Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources*, ed. Bill T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 216 (ARM 2.48 = LAPO 17.559 = Sasson 4.5.c.iv.1).

[266] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 190 (ARM 6.38+ = LAPO 17.561 = Sasson 3.3.a.ii.2).

3.3.2.4. Assyrian

Although the Assyrian army earlier was primarily composed of Assyrians, as the empire expanded the need for more troops intensified and the Assyrians began incorporating many non-Assyrian soldiers into their army (especially beginning with the reign of Tiglath-pileser III).[268] The treaties between the Assyrians and other nations illustrate how troops from a vassal were incorporated into the Assyrian army. A treaty between the Assyrian king Assur-nirari V and Matiʾ-ilu (the king of Arpad) required the vassal himself and his army to go to war with the Assyrians.[269] Much later in Assyrian history, Assurbanipal stipulated that his Babylonian allies help him in battle: "[when *Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, our lord*, goes against his enemy], we will muster our bow[men] and stand with [Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, our lord, make] battle against [his foes], overwhelm, as is our fervent desire, his enemy, and make [our name] good [in the eyes of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria], our lord."[270]

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[267] Daniel E. Fleming, *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors: Mari and Early Collective Governance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 74 (ARM 1.6 = LAPO 17.641 = Sasson 2.1.a.iv.note).

[268] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 12. For more on the Assyrians employing foreign troops, see W. Manitius, "Das stehende Heer der Assyerkönige und seine Organisation," *ZA* 24 (1910): 97–149, 185–224; Bustenay Oded, *Mass Deportations and Deportees in the Neo-Assyrian Empire* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1979), 48–54; Postgate, *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire*, 218–26; Stephanie Dalley, "Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry in the Armies of Tiglath-Pileser III and Sargon II," *Iraq* 47 (1985): 31–48; Yehuda Kaplan, "Recruitment of Foreign Soldiers into the Neo-Assyrian Army during the Reign of Tiglath-Pileser III," in *Treasures on Camels' Humps: Historical and Literary Studies from the Ancient Near East Presented to Israel Ephʿal*, ed. Mordechai Cogan and Danʾel Kahn (Jerusalem: Magnes, 2008), 135–52; Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 89–101; Davide Nadali, "The Representation of Foreign Soldiers and Their Employment in the Assyrian Army," in *Ethnicity in Ancient Mesopotamia: Papers Read at the Forty-Eighth Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale Leiden, 1–4 July 2002*, ed. W. H. van Soldt PIHANS 102 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2005), 222–44; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 39–50.

[269] SAA 2.2, iv.1–3; *COS* 4.34:151.

After a foreign land was incorporated into Assyria, mustering troops out of these lands to serve in the Assyrian army was often difficult to accomplish. Taklak-ana-Bel, the governor of Babylon, reported to Sargon II that several towns refused to give men for military service. The king proposed to give the towns to Bel-duri, the governor of Damascus, if they did not obey (SAA 1.240). These foreign troops apparently had to take oaths to serve the Assyrian king (as noted above in §3.3.1.4, Assyrian soldiers might have had to have taken these oaths as well). Bel-ibni reported to Assurbanipal that many soldiers of the Sealand had deserted to the Assyrians, and the next day he had them take an oath (*adê*).[271] In another letter, Bel-ibni again reported that some deserters had taken oaths and began to attack Assyria's enemies (Elam) under the command of an Assyrian (Mushezib-Marduk, the nephew of Bel-ibni). Bel-ibni summarized their oath as "We are servants of the king of Assyria."[272]

The differences between troops from vassal kings and mercenaries would, in theory, be that mercenaries came from countries that did not serve the Assyrians. However, determining the exact nature of their relationship is often difficult. One example of mercenaries might be the Itu'eans employed to cow the Sidonians in SAA 19.22 = ND 2715 since no texts record taking captives from the Itua tribe.[273] Nashir-Bel also employed Itu'eans (SAA 5.3) and exempted an Itu'ean prefect from a straw and barley tax (SAA 5.16). They did not always act in appropriate ways, however, as illustrated by the complaint of Bel-leshir about a group of Itu'eans who were stealing sheep (SAA 19.176) and an Itu'ean prefect who attacked a priest (SAA 13.33).

Since it was formerly believed that all the copies of the loyalty oaths to Esarhaddon were taken by those in the eastern border region of Assyria, Mario Liverani has speculated that the loyalty oath of the Medes to Esarhaddon (SAA 2.6) make the most sense if the Medes were bodyguards for him and his son Assurbanipal. Esarhaddon had fought in Media to dispel an internal dispute, and he developed a closer relationship with the group that asked him for help, perhaps leading to their employment as bodyguards.[274] However, another copy of the oath has recently been found in Tayinat, to the west of Assyria, showing that this document was not restricted to the Medes.[275]

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[270] SAA 2.9, 22′–25′.

[271] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 36 (*ABL* 521 = *SLA* 39).

[272] Ibid., 37–38 (*ABL* 280 = *SLA* 40); see *ABL* 792 = *SLA* 46 for another reference to deserters.

[273] Oded, *Mass Deportations*, 50–51; for more on the Itu'eans, see Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 96–100; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 32–37.

Finally, along with soldiers from vassals and possibly some mercenaries, many soldiers from defeated foreign nations were incorporated into the Assyrian army.[276] One of the clearest examples of this involves the chariot troops from Samaria who served under Sargon II. When he defeated Samaria, he incorporated part of their army into his royal army.

> The Samarians, who had [conspired?] against the king my [predecessor] not to endure servitude nor to bring tribute, became angry(?) and did battle. With the army of the great gods my lords I fought against them. I counted as spoil [x +] 7,280 people including [their] chariotry and the gods their help. I formed a unit of 200 chariots from them as part of my royal army, and I resettled the rest of them in Assyria. I repopulated Samaria more than before, and put into it people from the countries which I had conquered.[277]

Sargon II said that he incorporated these chariots into his "royal army" (*kiṣir šarrūti*), the standing army of the king, rather than into a provincial army. It appears that Sargon II only took Syrian troops into his royal army; troops from other places were added to his army without reference to the royal army (some evidence suggests that Urartu might also be an exception).[278] Further evidence of these Samarian chariot troops has been found in Fort Shalmaneser. During the time of Sargon II, a tablet (most likely a formal check list for a muster of the troops) from 710–708 recorded the presence of thirteen chariot troops from Samaria at Fort Shalmaneser.[279] Among the other units included in the tablet is a unit from Chaldea. However, another unit (recorded in a different tablet) includes reference to a "chief of deportees" overseeing a unit of foreigners who had their national identity removed.[280] More commonly, captured soldiers were split into different groups. One example is found in a list (most likely from the time of Tiglath-pileser III) from Nimrud of Babylonian military men (including horsemen, foot soldiers, and chariot drivers) whose units were broken up and sent to different destinations.[281]

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[274] RINAP 4:20, 1, iv.32–45; *COS* 4.39:177; Mario Liverani, "The Medes at Esarhaddon's Court," *JCS* 47 (1995): 57–62.

[275] For more on the critique of Liverani's theory, see Fales, "After Ta'yinat," 142–48.

[276] For a list of references to incorporating foreign troops into the Assyrian army, see Oded, *Mass Deportations*, 108–9.

[277] Dalley, "Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry," 36 (Sargon II's Nimrud Prism); for another translation, see *COS* 2.118D:295–96.

[278] Ibid., 38–40.

[279] Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 173 (tablet 99).

Many foreign troops were brought into the Assyrian army as infantry. A letter to Sargon II from Adad-issiya described a multinational army (called the "king's men"), consisting of Assyrian, Gurreans, and Itu᾽eans (SAA 5.215). According to the iconography, the foreign troops were usually on the front lines of the battles and most likely would have often suffered severe losses.[282] Over time it appears that these auxiliaries lost at least some of their ethnic identity and became simply the light infantry of the Assyrian army.[283] However, as noted above with the Samarians, a select few foreign troops entered the Assyrian army as cavalry and charioteers.[284] It is also possible that the officer who addressed the people of Jerusalem in their own language (2 Kgs 18:28) was one of the exiles from the Northern Kingdom who worked his way up the ranks.[285] Although foreign troops kept their equipment when incorporated into the Assyrian army, it is likely that their equipment (such as shields) were given different symbols to differentiate them from enemy troops.[286] While not consistent, the reliefs show foreign troops with different dress.[287]

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[280] Ibid., 37, 193 (tablet 102).

[281] Kaplan, "Recruitment of Foreign Soldiers" (ND 2619).

[282] Nadali, "Representation of Foreign Soldiers," 229–30.

[283] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 24.

[284] For details, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 32–35, 81–87, 92–93.

[285] Yigal Levin, "How Did Rabshakeh Know the Language of Judah?," in *Marbeh Ḥokmah: Studies in the Bible and the Ancient Near East in Loving Memory of Victor Avigdor Hurowitz*, ed. Shamir Yona et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 323–37.

[286] Fabrice De Backer, *The Neo-Assyrian Shield: Evolution, Heraldry, and Associated Tactics* (Atlanta: Lockwood, 2016), 96.

[287] For details, see Julian Reade, "The Neo-Assyrian Court and Army: Evidence from the Sculptures," *Iraq* 34 (1972): 104–7; Nadali, "Representation of Foreign Sol-

3.3.2.5. Later Empires

Grain records show that Kassite mercenaries lived at an Old Babylonian fortress at Dur-Abieshuh (before the Kassites began their reign in Babylon).[288] Although the Neo-Babylonians most likely employed foreign troops (either deported troops or troops from tribes under the control of the Babylonians) and mercenaries in their army, little evidence for this exists except for a few groups of Egyptians, Cilicians, and Assyrians.[289] Nabonidus recorded that foreign troops served in his army: Shamash "made the people of the land of Akkad and the Hatti-land, whom he had committed to my hands, (to be) of true mouth and heart with me; they kept guard for me they accomplished my command in the seclusion of tracts far distant and roads secluded which I travelled."[290]

The Persians employed many foreign troops. Extensive administrative documents from a Babylonian temple at Sippar demonstrate that the temple provided troops for the Persian army and a few texts record that Jews served in Persian armies.[291] Xenophon refers to Cyrus issuing orders to his Greek troops through an interpreter.[292] The Persians routinely would impress conquered nations into service in their army (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.171; 6.6), though these foreign troops might have served mainly as

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diers"; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 25–52.

[288] Karel van Lerberghe and Gabriella Voet, "Kassite Mercenaries at Abiešuḫ's Fortress," in *Why Should Someone Who Knows Something Conceal It? Cuneiform Studies in Honor of David I. Owen on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Alexandra Kleinerman and Jack M. Sasson (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2010), 181–87.

[289] MacGinnis, "Mobilisation and Militarisation," 159–60; MacGinnis, *Arrows of the Sun*, 45–47; Joannés, "Guerre et économie dans l'Empire néo-babylonien," 67; Greeks might have also served in Babylon; see Rodan, *Aegean Mercenaries in Light of the Bible*, 5.

[290] C. J. Gadd, "The Harran Inscriptions of Nabonidus," *AnSt* 8 (1958): 60–61.

[291] For temple personnel in the Persian army, see John MacGinnis, "The Role of Babylonian Temples in Contributing to the Army in the Early Achaemenid Empire," in Curtis, *World of Achaemenid Persia*, 495–502. For Jews in the Persian army, see Jacob L. Wright, "Surviving in an Imperial Context: Foreign Military Service and Judean Identity," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 505–28.

[292] *Anab.* I, 2.17 in Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 847.

a parade army to emphasize the power of the Persian king.[293] Herodotus recorded that Cyrus enlisted inhabitants along the way to his battle with Croesus in Cappadocia (*Hist.* 1.76).

3.3.2.6. West Semitic

In the West Semitic world, the western kings themselves were the ones being hired by an empire to fight for them. For example, Panamuwa and his son Bar-Rakib were vassals of the Assyrian king ("ran at the wheel" of the Assyrian king) and fought battles for him.[294] The vassal kings sometimes called on their overlords to help them in their own battles. Kulamuwa recounted that he "hired" the Assyrians to fight against the Danunians.[295] The Amarna letters are filled with requests by the vassal kings for help from the pharaoh. In one letter, Arsawuya told the pharaoh that he was prepared for the arrival of the Egyptian archers: "May I join up with the archers of the king and his commissioners so that, having everything prepared, I might follow them wherever they are at war against the king, my lord, and we capture them (and) give his enemies into the hand of the king, our lord."[296] The Habiru and the Suteans might have been mercenaries that could be hired to fight. Biryawaza wrote to the pharaoh that his Habiru and Suteans were with his troops and ready to go wherever the pharaoh sent them (EA 195).[297] Smaller kingdoms like Ugarit most likely employed foreign troops, but direct evidence for this is lacking.[298] In many of the Arad ostraca, reference is made to paying the Kittim, which most likely refers to Greek mercenaries late in the divided monarchy.[299]

A few cases of hiring foreign troops can be found in the stories of the book of Kings. When Baasha took control of the central Benjamin plateau, the Judean king Asa sent much silver and gold to Ben-Hadad to convince him to attack Baasha (1 Kgs 15:16–22). Ben-Hadad went to war against Ahab with thirty-two kings fighting along with him, mostly serving as his vassals (1 Kgs 20:1). In the Syro-Ephramite War (in which Israel and Aram attacked Judah to force them to join an anti-Assyrian league), Ahaz called on the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III for help (2 Kgs 16:1–9). The expanded story of the Judean king Amaziah in Chronicles includes an anecdote about Judah hiring Israelite troops to go with them to fight against the Edomites, but YHWH commanded him to send them home before the battle (2 Chr 25:5–13).

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[293] Briant, "Achaemenid Empire," 116–20; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 195–98.

[294] *COS* 2.37:159–60; 2.38:161.

[295] *COS* 2.30:147–48.

[296] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 271 (EA 191).

[297] Jordi Vidal, "Sutean Warfare in the Amarna Letters," in Vidal, *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East*, 95–103.

[298] Jordi Vidal, "Ugarit at War (2): Military Equestrianism, Mercenaries, Fortifications and Single Combat," *UF* 38 (2007): 702–5.

[299] Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 93.

3.4. March to War

After mustering the troops, the leaders had to convey those troops to the battlefield. Often overlooked in popular accounts of battle, mastering these logistical concerns of movement and supply were (and remain) the mark of a great general. This section will divide the discussion into three areas: the time of departure and speed of the march, crossing natural boundaries on the way to battle, and supplying water and food to the soldiers during the march. We will mainly focus on the view from the top, as generals decided how to lead their troops to battle. The later sections on officers and soldiers (§§6.4 and 6.5) will provide more of the common soldier's perspective of life during campaign.

3.4.1. Time of Departure and Speed of March

> Speed is the essence of war. Take advantage of the enemy's unpreparedness; travel by unexpected routes and strike him where he has taken no precautions.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 11.29

One of the first logistical questions to address was when to leave on campaign. For the most part, kings began their campaigns in the spring and early summer when the rain was beginning to end and the roads were more passible. The summer also tended to be in between the harvest times, freeing up more men for battle. Another major question to decide was how fast the army would move. The armies always moved by foot because wheeled vehicles and animals were never sufficient to transport the entire army. Unfortunately, it is frequently difficult to determine the speed of travel due to the vagueness of the accounts. Analysis of the later marches of Alexander the Great show that his average speed for the entire army was about thirteen miles per day, which will provide a baseline estimate for the armies of the ancient Near East.[300]

3.4.1.1. Egyptian

The pharaohs usually began their campaigns in the spring, between mid-April and early May.[301] Thutmose III began his march against Megiddo in early April, when the wheat harvest was finishing and his men could leave harvesting.[302] The grain harvest happened earlier in Egypt than in the Levant, so the Egyptians could finish harvesting their land and then march north to conquer the fields to the north before they had been harvested.[303] Thutmose III later returned to Thebes in October. Ramesses II left in the second month of Shomu (around June).[304] Seti I arrived to battle the Nubians on the twenty-first day of the fourth month of Peret (late April/early May).[305] Psamtik II received a report about his troops on campaign in the second month of summer, while Piye left on his campaign in the first month of the inundation, late in the summer.[306]

Travel on the Nile was very rapid, most likely around 55 km/day (34 mi./day). However, in the New Kingdom when expeditions were made to Canaan, the army was required to march on foot, where their speed was probably around 16–24 km/day (10–15 mi./day), as demonstrated in Thutmose III's advance to Megiddo.[307]

3.4.1.2. Hittite

Like elsewhere, it appears the Hittite kings went on campaign in the spring. Suppiluliuma wintered in Hattusa and began his campaign after a spring festival.[308] Mursili II began his campaign when spring began.[309] Not enough data has been left to determine the speed of their marches.

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[300] Donald W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 153–56.

[301] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 67; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 340–44.

[302] *COS* 2.2A:8; Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 85.

[303] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 129.

[304] *COS* 2.5A:33.

[305] "Nubian War, Amarah West & Sai, Yesr [*sic*] 8 (?), Full Text" *RITA* 7.Seti I.184:9.

[306] Psamtik: *AEL* 3:85; Piye: Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 477.

[307] For calculations, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 32–34; Redford, *Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, 202–3.

3.4.1.3. Early Mesopotamia

A letter from Shamshi-Adad to Yasmah-Adad refers to a campaign happening in Ayarum and instructed him to return on the twentieth of Adar (in the spring), which he said was five days before the harvest (ARM 1.43 = LAPO 17.492). An itinerary text from approximately 1800 records a long trip to Emar from Larsa with speeds up to 30 km/day (18 mi./day), but the average speed overall was closer to the more common 25 km/day (15 mi./day).[310]

3.4.1.4. Assyrian

The Assyrians usually went to war in the springtime, but the exact time is not often mentioned in the inscriptions.[311] Esarhaddon left on one campaign in the first month, Nisannu (March–April), while Adad-narari II went on campaigns in Simanu (May–June) and Nisannu and Tukulti-Ninurta II left Assur on a campaign in Nisannu.[312] Sargon II began his campaign against Urartu in the fourth month, Tammuz (June–July).[313] Although this was rather late, it meant that the passes were open during the initial assault and the granaries of the enemy would be filled to support the Assyrian army.[314] The late start could also reflect the impassibility of the mountain passes in the earlier parts of the summer.[315] When Esarhaddon traveled to attack his brothers after they had killed their father Sennacherib, he said "I was not afraid of the snow (and) cold of Šabāṭu

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[308] *COS* 1.74:189 (*CTH* 40).

[309] *COS* 2.16:86 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[310] William W. Hallo, "The Road to Emar," *JCS* 18 (1964): 57–88.

[311] For one interesting inscription that unusually marks the month of the various activities of the king over the course of the campaigns of Assur-bel-kala, see RIMA 2:100–105, A.0.89.7.

[312] Esarhaddon: RINAP 4:87, 34, 10′; Adad-narari II: RIMA 2:152, A.0.99.2, 91–96; Tukulti-Ninurta II: RIMA 2:173, A.0.100.5, 41–51.

[313] *COS* 4.42:199; Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 21; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 791.

[314] For discussion, see Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 128.

[315] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 124.

(XI), the severest cold season."[316] This implies that campaigns were not usually begun during this month (January–February), but due to the need for urgent action he began at that time. Since his father Sennacherib once went on a campaign during the winter month of Tamhiru and was forced by snow to return him, it is possible that Esarhaddon was implicitly distancing himself from his father Sennacherib by contrasting their attitude toward snow.[317]

The Assyrians appeared to move around 20 km/day (12.5 mi./day), though the actual distance covered could vary greatly.[318] The Assyrian kings sometimes employed forced marches to reach a destination quickly, such as Tiglath-pileser III did when putting down a rebellion by Matiʾ-il. "I marched for [a distance of] seven leag[ues],day and night, and I did not allow the troops of Assyria to rest, did not give (them) water to drink, (and) did not pitch camp nor bivouac my soldiers (allowing them to recover from) their weariness."[319]

3.4.1.5. Later Empires

Nebuchadnezzar I went on a campaign against the king of Elam during the month of Tammuz in the summer (June–July).[320] The Old Testament records that Nebuchadnezzar II began his siege against Jerusalem in the winter (2 Kgs 25:1). The Babylonian Chronicles provide a few dates for the beginning of campaigns, including Iyyar (April–May) for the campaigns of Nabopolassar in his tenth, thirteenth, and sixteenth years, Tammuz (June–July) in his fifteenth year, Elul (August–September) in his eighteenth year, and Sivan (May–June) in his nineteenth year. He returned in the months of Arahsamnu (October–November) in his fifteenth year, Adar (February–March) in his sixteenth year, Tebeth (December–January) in his eighteenth year, and Shebat (January–February) in his nineteenth year.[321]

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[316] RINAP 4:13, 1, i.66; also *COS* 4.39:174.

[317] RINAP 3.1:181, 22, v.6–11; Greta van Buylaere, "I Feared the Snow and Turned Back," in Luukko, *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars*, 303.

[318] W. Mayer, *Politik und Kriegskunst der Assyrer*, ALASP 9 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1995), 463–66.

[319] RINAP 1:85, 35, i.27′–30.

[320] RIMB 2:34, 2.4.11, i.14–24; also *ANEHST*, 161; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 383–84.

[321] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 219–27.

Nebuchadnezzar II left in the months of Siwan (May–June) in his first year and Iyyar (April–May) in his second year, Kislev in his sixth, seventh year, and eleventh years (November–December), and Tebeth (December–January) in his eighth year; he returned in the year of his accession, his first year, and his eighth year in the month Shebat (January–February) and in the month of Adar (February–March) in his sixth year.[322] Little detail is known about the speed of travel of the Babylonian armies, but Nebuchadnezzar I described a march through desert territory without water for his troops in which he increased the average daily speed of the army (the month Duʾūzu is Tammuz).

> In the month of Duʾūzu he set out on campaign. During the whole ti[me] (of the campaign) *the blistering heat* burnt like fire and the (very) roadways scorched like flames. There was no water in the places which were (normally) waterlogged and the drinking places were cut off. The best of the great horses gave out (lit., "stood") and the legs of the strong warrior sought for a respite (lit., "turned"). (Yet) the king, the preeminent one, goes on, the gods supporting him. Nebuchadnezzar proceeds on; he has no equal. He does not fear the difficult terrain; *he (even) increases the daily march*.[323]

3.4.1.6. West Semitic

Several Old Testament texts refer to campaigns beginning in spring (1 Kgs 20:22, 26; 2 Kgs 13:20). David famously did not go on campaign "in the spring of the year, the time when kings go out to battle," leading to the Bathsheba episode (2 Sam 11:1).

3.4.2. Crossing Natural Boundaries

> After crossing a river you must move some distance away from it.
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 9.4

After the army departed and began their march to the battle, they would often encounter natural boundaries to hinder their progress. The most common of these difficulties included rivers, mountains, and deserts. Not only did these natural boundaries cause physical difficulties for the troops, they also often symbolized borders between countries.[324]

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[322] Ibid., 229–31.

[323] RIMB 2:34, 2.4.11, i.14–24 (emphasis added); also *ANEHST*, 161; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 383–84.

3.4.2.1. Egyptian

Because of its location, the primary natural obstacle faced by the Egyptians was the desert. A scribal satirical text described a soldier's life in the desert during the summer: "For thy heat is like the might of Amūn; it is man's abomination. The sun rises not in his presence, the inundation flows not for him. He is like a mouse of the high inundation that finds no place of refuge."[325] Thutmose IV tracked a Nubian enemy in the desert. "He traversed the eastern desert opening the ways like the Upper Egyptian jackal, seeking out the trail of him who had attacked him. He found all the Nubian foe in a concealed valley of which no-one was aware since it was hidden from men behind the mountains."[326] If the troops ran out of water, a miracle could be hoped for. One text credited Min with a rainstorm in the Red Sea Desert that provided water for three thousand troops.[327] Mountains rarely appear as barriers, though a poetic text praising Merenptah (from P.Anast. 2) proclaimed that, "He crosses mountains to seek out those who would attack him."[328]

When the Egyptians traveled to the northeast, rivers blocked their path. A relief from Seti I depicts a moat that his troops crossed in the Sinai desert that was part of the Egyptian defenses.[329] Amenhotep II boasted that he crossed the Orontes by wading.[330] In the Gebel Barkal Stela Thutmose III told how he crossed the Euphrates. “I had many vessels of ʾš-wood built on the mountains of God’s Land in the neighbourhood of the Lady of Byblos, which were then placed on carts and oxen dragged them. They travelled before my Majesty to cross that great river which flows between this foreign land and Naharin.”[331] In the battle of Qadesh both the Egyptian and Hittite troops crossed the Orontes River during the course of the battle.[332]

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[324] E.g., the Euphrates served as the border of the Assyrian territory during the time of Assurnasirpal, heightening the rhetorical impact of his emphasis on crossing it; see Younger, *Political History of the Arameans*, 290.

[325] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 230 (P.Anast. 5).

[326] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 3*, 252 (Konosso Stela); see also *ARE* 2:327–29.

[327] James K. Hoffmeier, *Akhenaten and the Origins of Monotheism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 42.

[328] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 140; also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 43.

[329] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 6; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:40, 43; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 244.

[330] *COS* 2.3:20; Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 30 (Memphis/Karnak Stela).

3.4.2.2. Hittite

The Hittites did not generally pay attention to natural boundaries in their inscriptions. Hattusili I recounted that he crossed the Euphrates on foot at the head of his troops, reminding his readers that Sargon the Great had done something similar (though he also said that Sargon had not destroyed Hahha like he had).[333] In his treaty with Shattiwaza of Mitanni, Suppiluliuma I emphasized that he crossed the Euphrates River several times in his campaigns.[334] One oracle text refers to the danger of heavy rains in the mountains.[335]

3.4.2.3. Early Mesopotamian

An amusing Sargon legend parodies the style of bombastic annals. In one section, Sargon split the mountains in two on his way to the battlefield and set up a monument to himself there.[336] Sargon’s grandson Naram-Sin recorded that he crossed both the Tigris and Euphrates rivers as well as going to Bashar, which he calls an Amorite mountain, as part of a campaign, but does not magnify the accomplishment or describe any difficulty with the crossings.[337]

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[331] *COS* 1.365:2; also *COS* 2.2B:14–18; *ANET*, 238, 240.

[332] *RITA* 2.3A:4–5; for details on the mechanics of this, see *RITANC* 2:39.

[333] *ANEHST*, 221 (*KBo* 10.2, iii 29–36; *CTH* 4.II.A); Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 298. For more on how the Hittites might have learned about Sargon and why they appealed to his memory, see Gary Beckman, “Sargon and Naram-Sin in Ḫatti: Reflections of Mesopotamian Antiquity among the Hittites,” in *Die Gegenwart des Altertums: Formen und Funktionen des Altertumsbezugs in den Hochkulturen der Alten Welt*, ed. Dieter Kuhn and Helga Stahl (Heidelberg: Forum, 2001), 85–91.

[334] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 42–44 (*CTH* 51).

[335] Richard H. Beal, “Seeking Divine Approval for Campaign Strategy: *KUB* 5.1 + *KUB* 52.65,” *Ktema* 24 (1999): 53.

[336] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 74.

References to mountains are rare in the Mari letters (though see ARM 27.177). One letter reported the breaking down of a chariot in the mountains. “The king gave me a chariot, but when I went away between the country and the mountains, that chariot broke in the middle, and now as I travel to and fro there is no chariot for me to ride. It if please my lord, may my lord give me another chariot, so that I can organise the country until my lord comes.”[338] However, problems with cold weather during a campaign are more common. Shamshi-Adad complained about Jashub-Adad, an ally in Ahazum (northeast of Assur), who had broken his alliance with him. He wanted to send troops to fight him, but had to wait two months until the cold weather ended before he could reach him.[339] A group of Babylonian generals wrote to Zimri-Lim requesting clothes because the troops were naked and the army was marching in cold weather (FM 6.13 = Sasson 3.3.a.iv.1c). The diviner Ashqudum wrote a letter to Zimri-Lim concerning a trip to move a large drum (it took sixteen men to move it). The letter describes the hardships of the troops on the trip related to food and cold, as the soldiers could not pull the boats due to the cold. Unfortunately for the soldiers, the boats (which were left behind), contained the food provisions (ARM 26.18 = Sasson 6.3.a.v.note). The same diviner wrote another letter to the king concerning details about the travel provisions his troops needed, especially oil, because “the troops are not [able to] ⌜do battle⌝ in the cold without the oil.”[340]

The Mari Letters refer often to boats (ARM 26.17; ARM 26.29; ARM 26.369). Yarim-adad described for Zimri-Lim the strategic agreement between Rim-Sin and Hammurabi, who had agreed to support each other in case of attack by using small boats to transport their troops (ARM 26.367). ARM 26.71-bis and ARM 26.503 refer to boats transporting siege equipment. A letter from Ibal-pi-El reported that his men had prevented the enemy from crossing a river (ARM 2.30+ = LAPO 17.581). Ishme-Dagan once allowed an enemy army to cross a river to safety, but he had stationed one of his armies on the other side of the river.[341] Jadinum asked his father Kuwari (the ruler of Shusharra and vassal of Shamshi-Adad) to remove a ferry from a river to prevent three hundred Gutean troops from crossing the river and joining the enemy Jashub-Adad in Shikshabbum.[342] Shamshi-Adad stated that he had crossed the River Zab to raid on the other side, but does not provide any further details.[343]An administrative text from Ur records the hiring of men to transport the army to and from battle, perhaps by boat: "70 workmen days having ensured the transfer of the army as far as Magan; 30 workmen days having ensured the transfer (back) of the army from Anšan."[344]

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[337] RIME 2:91, E2.1.4.2, ii.7–20.

[338] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 164 (ARM 5.66 = LAPO 16.77).

[339] Eidem and Læssøe, *Shemshara Archves 1*, 75, no. 3; see ibid., 44–52 for the historical background of this incident.

[340] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 192–93 (ARM 26.29).

3.4.2.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian empire was centered on the easily traversable plains of Mesopotamia. However, in order to expand its empire, the Assyrian army was required to cross multiple natural obstacles in its military campaigns, including rivers, mountains, deserts, and marshes. In ideological terms, these barriers were symbols of the chaos outside the heartland of Assyria; the crossing of these boundaries by the Assyrian king demonstrates the defeat of chaos and the expansion of order.[345] The most prominent natural obstacles to Assyria's foreign expansion were rivers, especially the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Some rivers could simply be forded.[346] Marduk-nasir told an Assyrian king (either Sargon II or Sennacherib) about crossing a ford [*nēberu*] of the river Abani (SAA 17.136). Locals could be recruited to identify the location of fords. An unidentified author advised Assurbanipal to let the local Arabs show him where to cross the river near Opis and Dur-Sharrukku (SAA 18.154).[347] Although most commonly the Assyrian annals describe the Assyrian kings crossing the rivers at flood stage to go to war, Shalmaneser III described how a defeated enemy king crossed the Euphrates at flood stage. However, instead of glorifying that enemy king, this dangerous crossing showed to the Assyrian king how desperate his enemy was to flee from him.[348]

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[341] ARM 4.23 = LAPO 17.505; see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 43.

[342] Eidem and Læssøe, *Shemshara Archves 1*, 118, no. 47; for historical background, see ibid., 44–52.

[343] RIMA 1:64, A.0.39.1011.

[344] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 5.

[345] Mario Liverani, "The Ideology of the Assyrian Empire," in *Power and Progaganda: A Symposium on Ancient Empires*, ed. Mogens Trolle Larsen, Mesopotamia 7 (Copenhagen: Akademisk, 1979), 306–7.

[346] Frederick Mario Fales, "Rivers in Neo-Assyrian Geography," in *Neo-Assyrian Geography*, ed. Mario Liverani, QGS 5 (Rome: Università di Roma "La Sapienza," 1995), 207–8.

[347] The name *Arab* is broken, however, so their identification cannot be certain.

The Neo-Assyrian kings in their annals often boasted of the ease with which they crossed mighty rivers. For example, during his march to Egypt Esarhaddon said that "I set out from my city, Aššur, (and) crossed the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers when they were at flood level."[349] The focus on crossing the river at flood stage as if they were dry land was a common motif. Sargon II claimed "I had my troops cross the Tigris (and) Euphrates in full flood, in the high waters of spring, as if on dry land."[350] He also successfully crossed another river between Mounts Nikippa and Upa: "I crossed the Puia, a torrent between those peaks, twenty-six times, nor did my troops in their own rising flood, fear its high waters."[351] After Esarhaddon's brothers fled from his attack, he pursued them and crossed the Tigris River in grandiose style. "I reached the embankment of the Tigris River and by the command of the gods Sîn (and) Šamaš, the divine lord(s) of the embankment, I made all of my troops hop over (*šḫṭ*, š) the wide Tigris River as if it were a small canal."[352] Sargon II said he made his armies "leap over the Lower Zab, the crossing of which is difficult, as if it were a ditch."[353] Finally, he said he "crossed the Rappa and Aratta rivers at the high point of their rapids as if they were irrigation ditches."[354] Assurbanipal fought the Elamite king Ummanaldasi in his eighth campaign. When Ummanaldasi left his royal city, he sought to defend himself with a river by making his new royal city on the Idide River. Only with Ishtar's help was the Assyrian king able to cross the river and defeat the Elamite.

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[348] RIMA 3:19, A.0.102.2, ii.30b–35a.

[349] RINAP 4:87, 34, 10′.

[350] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 110 (Nineveh Annal Prism).

[351] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 792; also *COS* 4.42:199–200; for more on the number of times Assyrian kings crossed the Euphrates (focusing on Tiglath-pileser I and Shalmaneser III), see Marco de Odorico, *The Use of Numbers and Qualifications in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions*, SAAS 3 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1995), 136–39.

[352] RINAP 4:14, 1, i.84–86; also *COS* 4.39:175.

[353] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 791; also *COS* 4.42:199.

[354] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 793.

> In the course of my campaign, the city of Dūr-Undasi, his royal city, I captured. The troops, saw (the river) Idide, and raging wave, they were afraid of the crossing. Ištar, who dwells in Arbela, in a night vision to my soldiers revealed a dream, and thus she said to them, saying, "I will go before Aššurbanipal, the kin whom my hands created." My troops relied on that dream, the (river) Idide they crossed safely.[355]

Often the king described in more detail how he crossed the mighty rivers. Crossing the rivers on goat skins was a common technique (fig. 3.4). Chasing after an Aramean enemy fleeing from the conquest of Carchemish who had crossed the Euphrates, the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser I recorded that he followed them across the river by means of inflated goat skins.[356] After he left Til-Barsip, Shalmaneser III "crossed the Euphrates, which was in flood, in rafts (made of inflated) goatskins."[357] One letter refers to a "wineskin-raft man" (SAA 1.128). Circular boats (called a *qufa* or a *guffa* today) were also available to cross rivers, as demonstrated in a relief of Sennacherib that shows both the small boats as well as men on inflated skins.[358] Another relief from Sennacherib shows the soldiers preparing the skins to be used to cross the river.[359] A third relief shows a raft with four men on it (one is fishing) supported by animal skins.[360] The modern *kelek*, which is a square shaped raft with a small enclosed space in the middle, might be related to these rafts.[361]

As is commonly the case, the letters provide a more realistic view of river crossings. Sharru-emuranni reported to Sargon II that the men could not swim and the natural obstacles were too great to make the commanded trip. Another way to cross a large river was to construct a bridge.[362] Assur-

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[355] *COS* 4.41:190; also *ARAB* 2:308, §807; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 240.

[356] RIMA 2:23, A.0.87.1, v.54–59.

[357] RIMA, 3:18, A.0.102.2, 16.

[358] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 102–4, 143 (Or.Dr.IV.49 = BM 124823); an unusual part of this relief is the Assyrian soldier sitting on the skin rather than lying on it.

[359] Ibid., pl. 192, no. 273 (Or.Dr.IV.74).

[360] Ibid., pl. 226, no. 309 (Or.Dr.IV.78).

[361] Frederick Mario Fales, "River Transport in Neo-Assyrian Letters," in *Šulmu IV: Everyday Life in Ancient Near East; Papers Presented at the International Conference Poznań, 19–22 September, 1989*, ed. Julia Zablocka and Stefan Zawadski, Seria Historia NR 182 (Poznań: UAM, 1993), 86–87.

[362] Fales, "Rivers in Neo-Assyrian Geography," 209–11.

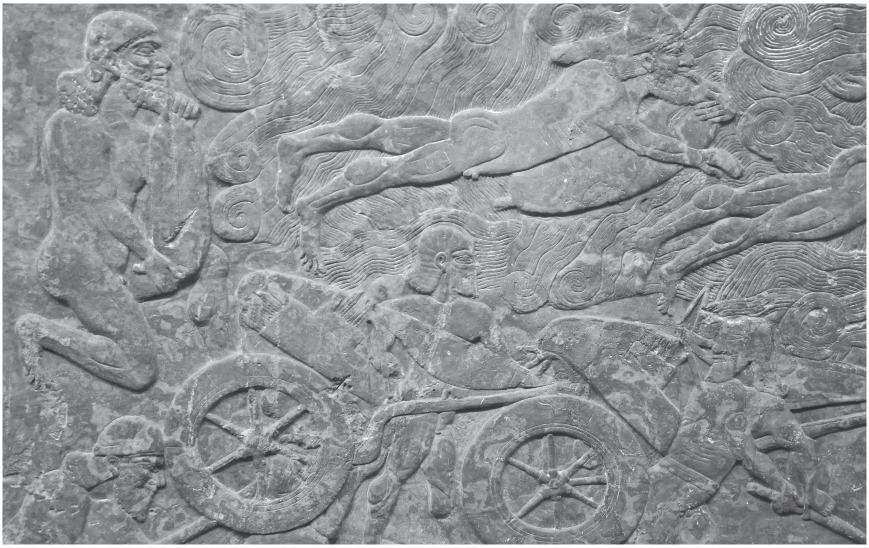

Fig. 3.4. Assyrian soldiers crossing river on goat skins. British Museum 124541. Photo courtesy of Gtoffoletto, Wikimedia Commons.

nasirpal II recorded that he crossed the Tigris on a bridge of rafts.[363] Band 11 of the Balawat Gates shows the infantry and chariots of Shalmaneser III crossing a river on a bridge of boats.[364] The treasurer Tab-shar-Assur informed Sargon II that the army crossed a flooding river and constructed a bridge for the king to cross. "Tomorrow, as the king my lord said, they should set to it and bring the camp over; perhaps we can finish the bridge by the time they are through with the camp, so the king can cross over on the bridge" (SAA 1.47). A letter to the mother of the Assyrian king by Na'id-Marduk described a battle with the Elamites over a bridge (SAA 18.85).

A letter from Mar-Issar, Esarhaddon's agent in Babylon, describes the process of strengthening a bridge over a river so the king could cross in his chariot when he arrived.

> [There are] shi[ps *lined up*] across the Borsippa river. In the days of Sargon and the father of the k[ing, my lord], as the Borsippa river was narrow, they trod a ra[mp] on them, (but) it did not stay in good condi-

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[363] RIMA 2:210, A.0.101.1, ii.103b–110a.

[364] King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pls. 60–62.

> tion. N[ow] in the times of the king, my lord, the river has swollen much; they have improved the ramp, but it will not stay in good condition. Let the bridge of ships be kept as it is; wh[en] the king, my lord, comes, they will put in an improved filling, (so that) the king, my lord, can cross over it in his chariot. (SAA 10.364 = LAS 291)

When the Assyrian went north or east, they faced a different problem: the mountains blocked their path.[365] Tiglath-pileser I described his march through the mountains to attack the land of Ishdish in evocative terms. "In Mount Aruma, a difficult area which was impassible for my chariots, I abandoned my chariotry. Taking the lead of my warriors I slithered victoriously with the viciousness of a viper over the perilous mountain ledges."[366] When the gods commanded him to attack Ḫanigalbat, Shalmaneser I described his difficult march there. "I opened up most difficult paths (and) passes. Shattuara, king of the land Ḫanigalbat, with the aid of the armies of the Hittites and Aḫlamu, captured the passes and watering-places (in) my (path). When my army was thirsty and fatigued (lit., 'because of the thirst and fatigue of my army') their army made a fierce attack in strength."[367] In some cases chariots could carried over difficult terrain (fig. 3.5).

The reliefs show the mountain-crossing motif in a variety of ways (fig. 3.6). One of the bands of the Balawat gates shows Shalmaneser III's troops crossing a mountain with a groom pulling two horses over a large hill; another part of the band shows a group of infantry crossing a different hill.[368] A similar motif is seen in a relief from Assurnasirpal II (fig. 3.7). One interesting relief from Sennacherib shows Assyrian troops climbing a hill in a forested area while preparing to attack a city, but several of the men are sitting down under trees and resting (the attack begins in the right hand side of the picture, where the men are gathered closer together in straight lines).[369] Another relief from Sennacherib depicts his

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[365] Simonetta Ponchia, "Mountain Routes in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions (Part I)," *KASKAL* 1 (2004): 139–77; Ponchia, "Mountain Routes in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions, Part II," *SAAB* 15 (2006): 193–271.

[366] RIMA 2:16, A.0.87.1, ii.72–77.

[367] RIMA 1:183–84, A.0.77.1, 59–66.

[368] King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pls. 3, 5 (BM 124662).

[369] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 32, no. 20 (Or.Dr.IV.4); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:303.

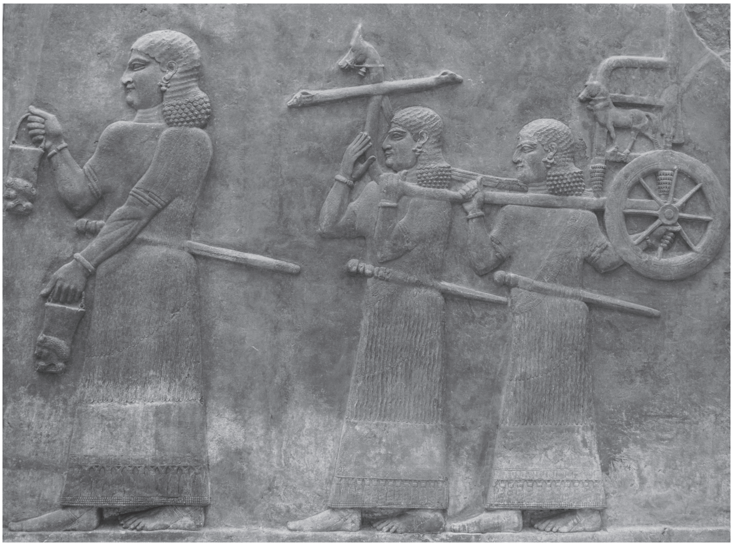

Fig. 3.5. Assyrians carrying a chariot. Louvre AO 19882. Photo courtesy of Sailko, Wikimedia Commons.

cavalry riding down a path in mountainous terrain.[370] Sennacherib vividly described the difficulties of crossing a mountain.

> Like a fierce wild bull, with my select bodyguard and my merciless combat troops, I took the lead of them (the soldiers in my camp). I proceeded through the gorges of the streams, the outflows of the mountains, (and) rugged slopes in (my) chair. Where it was too difficult for (my) chair, I leapt forward on my (own) two feet like a mountain goat. I ascended the highest peaks against them. Where my knees became tired, I sat down upon the mountain rock and drank cold water from a water skin to (quench) my thirst.[371]

In Sargon's Eighth Campaign, he crossed Mount Simirriu, which he described in very impressive terms as a spear that reached the heavens and whose roots reached down to the underworld. Even though the passes were very difficult to cross (he compared them to the back of a fish), he successfully led his troops over the mountain.

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[370] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 80, no. 94 (Or.Dr.IV.43).

[371] RINAP 3.1:178, 22, iii.81–iv.9.

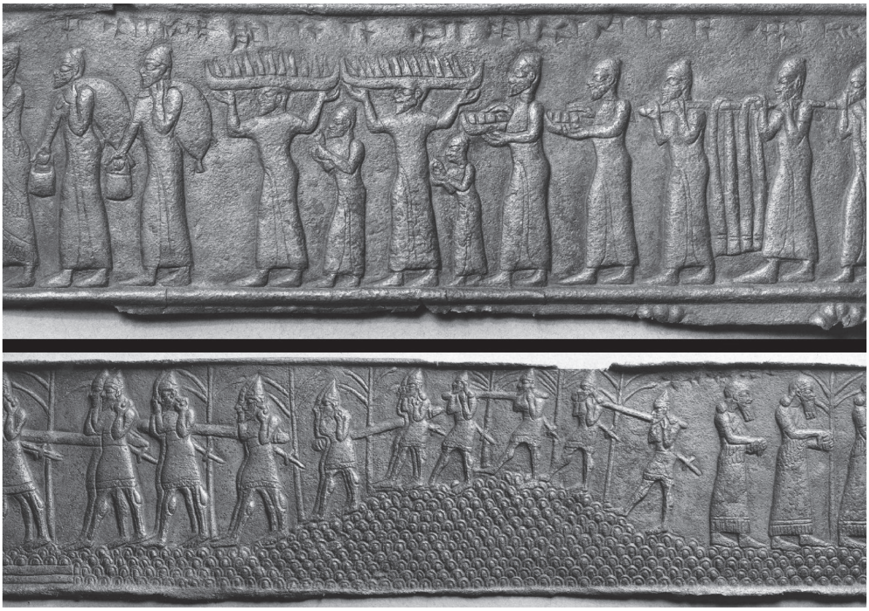

Fig. 3.6. Assyrians crossing a mountain carrying logs. Walters 54.2335 (part of the Balawat Gates). Photo courtesy of Walters Art Museum, Wikimedia Commons.

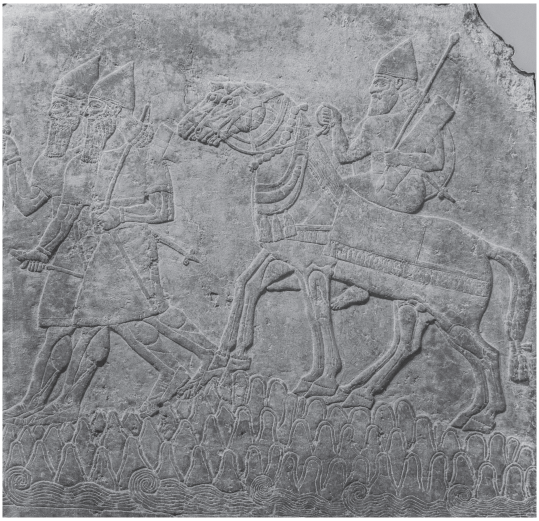

Fig. 3.7. Assyrian army crossing a mountain. BM 124558. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

> I provided my engineers with heavy copper mattocks, so they broke up the sharp peak of the mountain into fragments as if it was limestone, and made good the going. I took the lead position before my army, I made the chariotry, cavalry, and my combat troops fly over it like valiant eagles, I brought after them the support troops and scouts. The camels and pack mules gamboled over its peak, one after another, like mountain goats bred in the hills. I brought the surging flood of Assyrian troops easily over its arduous crest and made camp right on top of that mountain.[372]

Not only did the mountain terrain cause logistical difficulty for the troops, but snow (*šalgu* and *kupû*) intensified the issue (though references to snow in the royal annals are rare).[373] When Esarhaddon traveled to attack his brothers after they had killed their father Sennacherib, he said, "I was not afraid of the snow (and) cold of Šabāṭu (XI), the severest cold season."[374] However, on one occasion, on his way to attack Elam, Sennacherib admitted that he was afraid of the rain and the snow and turned around to go back to Nineveh. This was permissible because Assur killed the Elamite king Kudur-Nahundu three months later to save the king embarrassment.[375]

The letters provide more details about the danger of snow. Urda-Sin reported to Sargon II on a Cimmerian invasion of Urartu. The Urartians were terrified but hoped to attack the invaders if more snow arrived. The reason why the snow would be helpful is not explained, but it might relate to the snow causing greater difficulties for attackers than for defenders (SAA 5.145). The governor Assur-belu-usur reported to Sargon II that he had to leave a chariot at home in western Iran (Bit-Hamban) because of the large amount of snow (SAA 15.60). Nabu-belu-ka''in, another governor in western Iran, reported to Sargon II that he was "clearing the roads, but it is snowing and snow is filling them up." This concerned him because the large amount of snow two years before had killed his men and horses (SAA 15.83; 19.190). Scouting was limited during times of heavy snow (SAA 19.61). A letter from Assurbanipal noted that severe cold (presumably including snow) could kill horses (*ABL* 302).[376]

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[372] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 792–93; also *COS* 4.42:200.

[373] For more on snow in Assyria, see Buylaere, "I Feared the Snow and Turned Back."

[374] RINAP 4:13, 1, i.66; also *COS* 4.39:174.

[375] RINAP 3.1:180–81, 22, iv.81–v.16.

[376] For a translation, see Buylaere, "I Feared the Snow and Turned Back," 303–4.

The Assyrians also faced a few other terrain difficulties, especially deserts.[377] Esarhaddon described how he acquired water for his troops in southern Canaan. “By means of ropes, chains, (and) sweeps, I provided water for (my) troops drawn from wells. In accordance with the command of the god Aššur, my lord, it occurred to me and my heart [prompted me] (and thus) I col[lected] camels from all of the Arab kings [and lo]aded them with [water skins (and) water containers].”[378] An annal of Tukulti-Ninurta II described the difficulties of travel in the desert on his way to the land of Utu.

> I pitched camp (and) spent the night in the desert. Moving on from the desert I crossed the Wadi Tharthar, pitched camp, (and) spent the night. By midday all the water was drawn (and) I had exhausted (lit., “destroyed”) 470 wells in the environs. I killed on foot at the *well*.… On the second day at the *well* […] the water was too bitter to satisfy the troops. Moving on from the wells I [*took to*] the desert, pitched camp, (and) spent the night by the Wadi Tharthar. For four days I followed the banks of the Wadi Tharthar. On my expedition along the banks of the Wadi [Tharth]ar I killed eight wild bulls. I pitched camp (and) spent the night at the mouth of the Wadi Tharthar. Water was drawn. Moving on from the mouth of the Wadi Tharthar I continued through the *ḫamātu*, difficult terrain. In the *grasslands* I sighted streams. The wells around them were fallen in (lit., “destroyed”). (Nevertheless) water was abundant (and) I pitched camp (and) spent the night. Water was drawn all day and all night. I approached the Tigris and captured the settlements of the land of the Utu together with their villages, which were situated on the Tigris.[379]

Esarhaddon went as far as Bazu (located near Bahrain almost a thousand miles away from Nineveh). “(As for) the land Bāzu, a district in a remote place, a forgotten place of dry land, saline ground, a place of thirst, one hundred and twenty leagues of desert, thistles, and gazelle-tooth stones, where snakes and scorpions fill the plain like ants.”[380] Assurbanipal fought the Arabs in the barren deserts. “My troops, drew water for the drinking vessels, and they proceeded and went to a land of thirst, place of *kakkaltu*, as far as the city Ḫurarina, between the city of Iarki and the city of Azalla in the desert, a distant place, where there are no beasts of the field and a bird of heaven does not place its nest."[381]

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[377] Karlsson, *Relations of Power*, 128.

[378] RINAP 4:87–88, 34, 17′–r.2.

[379] RIMA 2:173, A.0.100.5, 41–50.

[380] RINAP 4:20, 1, iv.53–56; also *COS* 4.39:177.

One final difficult type of terrain was marshes. Sennacherib could not find Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II) when he fled into the marshes, even when his troops searched for five days.[382] The Puqudeans who dwelt in the marshes followed after the rebellious son of Yakin, leading to Assyrian calls to deport them from the marshes (SAA 17.142). A letter to Esarhaddon reflects how the marshes protected people from the Assyrians: "There are people in the marshes called *marsh dwellers*. In Shamash-ibni's time, thirty of their families fled and settled in Bit-Amukani. Together with their brothers they refuse to come close to us. They are the ones who four times last year called in the enemy against us" (SAA 18.185). In a query to the Sun God, Assurbanipal asked whether he should send his troops across the marshes to fight the troops of his brother Shamash-shum-ukin, reflecting the danger of crossing marshes (SAA 4.287). Several reliefs depict battles of the Assyrians against the Babylonians in the marshes of southern Mesopotamia.[383]

3.4.2.5. Later Empires

In one of the few Babylonian inscriptions that describe military matters, Neriglissar wrote something about a mountain pass, but unfortunately it is in a broken section.[384] Nebuchadnezzar II boasted that his travel accomplishments were greater than those of previous kings. "What no former king had done (I did): I cut through steep mountains and I shattered mountain stone. I opened passes; I made a straight road for (the hauling of) the cedars."[385] The Babylonian Chronicles record many instances of Nabopolassar fighting around the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.[386]

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[381] *COS* 4.41:193; also *ARAB* 2:316, §823 (Rassam Cylinder); Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 247.

[382] RINAP 3.1:34, 1, 34–35.

[383] See, e.g., Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 234–39, no. 340 (Or.Dr.IV.34 = BM 124774).

[384] Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar, Amel-Marduk, and Neriglissar*, 136.

[385] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 271.

[386] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 221–25.

According to Herodotus, Cyrus crossed the Gyndes River on boats on the way to attack Babylon (*Hist.* 1.189) and built a bridge of boats over the Araxes River in his campaign against the Massagetai (*Hist.* 1.205). Most famously, Darius built a bridge of boats over the Bosporus (*Hist.* 4.87). In the Bisitun Inscription, Darius wrote that when he went to Babylon to put down a rebellion, the Babylonians took their stand at the Tigris River. "The army of Nadintabaira held the Tigris. It took its stand there, and the water was not fordable. So I placed my army on skins; I placed one part on camels, for others I brought horses. Auramazda gave me help; by the favour of Auramazda, we crossed the Tigris." Darius "utterly defeated" the Babylonian army then, but he was forced to fight another battle five days later near the Euphrates River in which he defeated the Babylonians again and threw the remainder of the Babylonian army into the river.[387] In the following year, he fought against Scythia after he crossed a sea with his army (DB §74).[388] In another battle he records that his army fought at a mountain but does not refer to any difficulties (DB §42).[389]

3.4.2.6. West Semitic

In the book of Kings, little attention is paid to crossing difficult terrain. Based on the geography, it is clear that Israelite and Judean armies crossed the Jordan River (such as the battle against Ramoth-Gilead in Transjordan (1 Kgs 22). Outside of Kings, the history of Israel contains several famous episodes of miraculously crossing bodies of water, including the Red Sea (Exod 14) and the Jordan River at flood stage (Josh 3–4).

3.4.3. Water and Food Supplies

> Horses, oxen, chariots, weapons, relaxations, and an adequate diet are the army's strength.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 3

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[387] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 144 (DB col. 1§18–19).

[388] For Greek accounts of other river crossings associated with Persia (including Xenophon's description of Cyrus constructing a bridge out of seven boats), see ibid., 743–44.

[389] For Greek accounts of Persian difficulties with mountain passes, see ibid., 745–46.

> When a country is impoverished by military operations it is due to distant transportation; carriage of supplies for great distances renders the people destitute. Where the army is, prices are high.… Hence the wise general sees to it that his troops feed on the enemy.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 2.11–12, 15

The army on the march not only had to face natural obstacles, but they also had to eat and drink. If the estimate that an ancient army could travel only ten days before they needed to be resupplied is correct, then ensuring food and water supplies was an essential part of going on campaigns that lasted for months at a time.[390] In general, armies could be supplied in a variety of ways, including bringing supplies with them, being supplied by vassals, and living off the land (when in enemy territory). For his detailed study of logistics under Alexander the Great, Donald Engels suggests that the average ration would have been about three pounds of bread a day (just over three thousand calories) and two quarts of water a day (weighing about five pounds).[391]

3.4.3.1. Egyptian

Spalinger estimates that every day each man needed 6.6 kg of grain (14.5 lbs.) and 1.9 l of water (0.5 gallon), while each horse or mule needed 22 kg of forage (48.5 lbs.) and 30 l of water (8 gallons).[392] The most popular routes, such as that from the Delta to Gaza, would have included way stops along the way to supply water and food for the soldiers. For marches that did not involve resupply, the soldiers would need to bring food with them. Spalinger calculates that an army of 2,500 men would need 500 animals to carry enough food for them for ten days, another 833 animals to carry water for the men, and several thousand more animals to carry water for the animals.[393]

One of the scribal satirical texts illustrates a soldier’s life carrying his own food: “Come, (let me describe) to you his going to Khor and his marching upon the hills. His bread and his water are upon his shoulder like the load of an ass, his neck having formed a ridge like that of an ass.

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[390] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 36.

[391] Engels, *Alexander the Great*, 123–26.

[392] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 34–36.

[393] Ibid., 36–38.

The vertebrae of his back are bent whilst he drinks of smelly water and halts (only) to keep watch."[394] Another satirical text mocks the quality of military food: "He is hungry, his belly is in pain. He is dead whilst yet alive. He receives the corn-ration when he is released from duty, but it is not pleasant when it is ground.… During his long marchings on the hills he drinks water every three days, and it is smelly and tastes like salt."[395] The author of P.Anast. 1 mocks a scribe for miscalculating the amount of food needed for an army of five thousand men, leading to complaints from the troops. "The number of men is too large for you, and the foodstuff is insufficient for them: only 300 sweet loaves, 1,800 cakes, 120 assorted goats and sheep, and 30 jugs of wine. The army is so numerous that the foodstuff has been underestimated as though you had pilfered from it."[396]

The sea provided a way for the army to be supplied on some campaigns. Thutmose III established many harbors on the coast of the Levant to help supply his army, a tactic that greatly strengthened Egypt's hold on Canaan.[397] In the northern campaigns, the army would stop at major cities to resupply itself.[398] The local kings often supplied food and other supplies for Egyptian army units. Tiwati of Lapana told the pharaoh that he was prepared for the arrival of the Egyptian archers. "I have indeed oxen and sheep and goats ready, in accordance with your command on the tablet to me."[399] In one letter Akizzi described how he had supplied the Egyptian troops. "My lord, when the troops and chariots of my lord have come here, food, strong drink, oxen, sheep, and goats, honey and oil, were produced for the troops and chariots of my lord."[400]

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[394] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 92 (P.Anast. 3).

[395] Ibid., 401 (P.Lansing); however, given the genre, this reflection on military food is most likely not accurate; see Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 168.

[396] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 106; for an attempt to determine the number of calories that this would provide the army (it appears that it is less than a thousand calories a day per person), see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 150–52; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 177–78. For the argument that this list is specifically for local residents to feed the Egyptian army, see Abraham Malamat, "Military Rationing in Papyrus Anastasi I and the Bible," in *History of Biblical Israel: Major Problems and Minor Issues*, CHANE 7 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 353–61.

[397] *ARE* 2:200, 204; for more detail on how this supply chain worked, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 52–55.

[398] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 35–36.

[399] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 272 (EA 193); see also EA 195 and 201–206.

[400] Ibid., 127 (EA 55).

A few texts provide specifics for the rations given to the troops. An inscription from Seti I provides information on rations for the troops (though this appears to be above their normal level): "20 deben (1.82 kg) of bread; vegetables (in bundles); 1 piece of roast meat; and 2 sacks [the reading is somewhat unsure] of grain per month."[401] Part of a ship's log from the time of Ramesses II records one shipment that includes rations for a military company. "Given as rations for the men: Men of the (military) company, 8 men, making 8 white loaves."[402]

In the Eleventh Dynasty, Henu was appointed to lead an expedition to Punt to acquire various items. "I went forth with an army of 3,000 men. I made the road a river, and the Red Land (desert) a stretch of field, for I gave a leathern bottle, a carrying pole, 2 jars of water and 20 loaves to each one among them every day." He also recounted that he dug wells along the way to provide water for his men.[403] During the Eighteenth Dynasty, Pehsukher served as the army deputy, responsible for supplying food for the army. "Bringing the high-ranking among the military and the ordinary soldiers to Pharaoh, LPH, in order to provision them with bread, ox flesh, wine, *sꜣyt*-cakes, vegetables and all (kinds of) good things for satisfying the heart, in the presence of the good god by the prince and the count."[404] It appears that those occupying the rank of adjutant (*jdnw*) were responsible for provisioning the army.[405]

An early Middle Kingdom text lists the rations that a group of soldiers received on a series of days, including grain, wheat, dates, barley, and emmer.[406] The Manshiyet es-Sadr Stela is not related directly to the military but describes how Ramesses II rewarded the workmen who made the statues and temples in his honor. He tells how he fed the workers and cared for them, giving detail that might also describe the rations given to his troops.

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[401] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 41; also "East Silsila, Rock Stela, Year 6," *RITA* 1.Seti I.26:52; a similar text is in "Papyrus Northumberland II: Army Baking Account," *RITA* 1.Seti I.111:206. For a discussion of the caloric value of this per person (it appears to be high, around four thousand calories per day), see Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 168–75; for other places in the inscriptions of Seti I and Ramesses II expressing care for their workers (the theme is not found in the writings of other pharaohs), see *RITANC* 2:217.

[402] "Ship's Log, Year 52 (P.Leiden 1.350 Verso) in *RITA* 2.286:533.

[403] *ARE* 1:209.

[404] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 2*, 154 (Tomb of Peḥsukher); also Schulman, *Military Rank*, 92, no. 37. For a similar text, see ibid., no. 24 from the tomb of Amenemheb.

[405] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 35.

[406] T. G. H. James, *The Ḥeḳanakhte Papers and Other Early Middle Kingdom Documents*, PMMA19 (New York: Metropolitan, 1962), 71–74.

> The granaries groan for you with grain, so that not a day need be spent lacking victuals, each of you is sated by the month.
>
> I have filled the stores for you with everything; with bread, meat, cakes, to sustain you; sandals, clothing, unguent enough to anoint your heads every 10 days and your clothing (issued) annually, that you may persevere daily. None of you (need) pass the night moaning about poverty. I have assigned many people to supply you against need—fishermen to bring you fish, others in the gardens to provide vegetables (?), a potter to make pots and to make vessels to cool the water for you in the summer heat.
>
> For you the Southland ferries to the North and for you the Northland ferries to the South, with barley, emmer, wheat, salt and beans without limit. (I) have done all this so that you may be united in working for me. I went to Elephantine to explore for myself, (my) face (lighting) upon a good mountain. I have assigned its work site to you.[407]

3.4.3.2. Hittite

One of the primary sources of food and water for the Hittite army was the vassal kings. The vassal king was required to send enough travel provisions with his soldiers to sustain them until they arrived to join the Hittite army, as seen in a treaty between Tudhaliya II and Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna, who was required to provide not only a hundred chariots and a thousand infantry to accompany the king's army into battle, but also enough travel provisions to care for his troops until they joined the king's army.[408] In the treaty between Mursili II of Hatti and Targasnalli of Hapalla, the Hittite king commanded the vassal king to sustain the garrisons he left behind in his country. "Futhermore, have regard for the garrison troops which I, My Majesty, have left behind for you as you have regard for your[self], your household, and your servants. Sustain them and treat them well. You shall not mistreat [them in any way]. If you do mistreat them in any way, you will thereby have transgressed the oath."[409]

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[407] "Stela, Year 8, Manshiyet es-Sadr (Heliopolis) Cairo CGC 34504," *RITA* 2.127:195.

[408] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 24 (*CTH* 41; 131).

The Hittite troops would live off the land if they were in foreign territory. In the nineteenth year of Mursili II, he recorded the following story of his troops in Kaska land. "But because no Ḫatti-king had (yet) gone to these lands, I stayed up there longer. And the army had gone elsewhere after booty and took grain and wine."[410] Hattusili I recorded taking sheep for his troops. "Whatever sheep-folds there were I gave to my garrison troops."[411] A ration list recorded that each soldier received two SUTU of either grain or flour.[412] The importance of rations is illustrated by this command (from a series of Instructions, perhaps from Tudhaliya I):

> [Moreov(er)], let the matter of the soldiers' bread be a binding obligation from this moment on. [(When)] they mobilize the army for a campaign, let a *clan* chief and a commander inspect […], its soldiers' bread (and) its flour. He who [*does not have*] his soldiers' bread, though will no[t] undertake […], either. Do you not even k[no]w the [*matter*] of campaigning? Because of such (matters) transgressions (have occurred)![413]

One text reveals that some reinforcements of a garrison brought seeds with them to plant to supply their food.[414] An early New Kingdom letter describes the transport of rations for soldiers on boats and some of the problems associated with it.

> When ships transported provisions from Pitteyariga to Šamuḫa in two? trips, on the first trip (they carried) the following: 450 soldier-rations each made from a tenth (of some unit of dry measure), 600 soldier-rations of Kaška type from 15 (or 16) *PARISU* of wheat flour,… And since there was little water (in the river?), they put those things also on *small* boats.… But now the (situation) has changed? with respect? to? the water(-level), and … they have loaded the ships again of/in Pit-

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[409] Ibid., 70 (*CTH* 67); see also *TLC* 1:497; for similar clauses in other treaties, see ibid., 61 (*CTH* 62); ibid., 79 (*CTH* 68).

[410] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 47 (*KBo* 5.8 obv. I 37–40; *CTH* 61.II.7.A).

[411] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 129 (*KBo* 10.2; *CTH* 4.II.A); also *ANEHST*, 219.

[412] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 129–30, 557–59 (*HKM* 103).

[413] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 170–73 (*CTH* 251).

[414] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 129 (*HKM* 18:21–25).

> teyariga. And they put … as follows on the ships: 80 *PARISU* of wheat, 220 *PARISU* of barley, so that the total in the two/second$^?$ trip(s) (is) 130 *PARISU* of wheat, 220$^?$ *PARISU* of barley, 1,050 soldier-rations. For the first trip they load a small boat from Arziya, and put the following on it: 50 *PARISU* of barley, 600 "soldier-rations," … the grand total is as follows: that which the boats brought … to Šamuḫa: 1,650 "soldier-rations," including 450 soldier-rations each measuring a tenth (of …), 130 *PARISU*-measures of wheat, … and 300 *PARISU*-measures of wheat and barley. But now the ships have returned again to Pitteyariga. There they will load them (again).[415]

3.4.3.3. Early Mesopotamian

As evidenced by many requisition texts, cities in Sargonic Akkad were expected to provide food for armies passing through.[416] One reference to food is found in a legend about Naram-Sin in which he was preparing for war: "[Let us sh]ow you the manner of battle, the bread (baked) on coals, […] the drinking of water from waterskins."[417] Various documents throughout early Mesopotamia list the various amounts of food to be given to troops, though given the problems in determining the exact relationship of different units of measure it is difficult to compare them. An administrative text from Ur refers to food for returning soldiers: "12 sheep, 83 ewes, 25 male and 35 female goats for the soldiers who have returned from expedition."[418] Another text details the allotment of beer: "1,200 liters of ordinary beer for the soldiers who have returned from expedition."[419] Several texts documenting provisions of grains for fortresses outside of Sippar from the middle of the Old Babylonian king Ammiditana's reign reveal a larger system of provisioning troops.[420] A document from Nuzi records the amount of food for a group of charioteers. "9 hundred 10 homers of barley for the chariots of the land of Ḫanigalbat for 43 days for eating (at) 1 seah (each, i.e., per charioteer per day) together with his (i.e., each charioteer's) *billu*-beer and with his….

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[415] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 82–83 (*KUB* 31.79; *CTH* 188).

[416] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 96.

[417] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 179.

[418] Lafont, "The Army of the Kings of Ur," 5.

[419] Ibid., 6.

[420] Richardson, *Texts from the Late Old Babylonian Period*, 15–18.

When the chariots <of the land of> Ḫanigalbat were stationed in the town of Arn-apu and in the town of Arwa."[421]

Not surprisingly, due to its administrative focus, the Mari letters speak often of providing food for the troops.[422] The troops received provisions from the king at the beginning of the campaign to ensure "Qu'ils n'aient pas de motifs de mécontentement concernant viande et vin" (ARM 1.60 = LAPO 17.672),[423] which were designed to last for a varying period of time; different letters refer to a month (ARM 1.39 = LAPO 17.471; ARM 13.57 = LAPO 17.692), 15 days (ARM 1.43 = LAPO 17.492), or 10 days (ARM 1.66 = LAPO 18 860; ARM 2.75 = LAPO 17.557).[424] Yasim-Sumu complained that ten Bedouin who had been added to his army had not been provided with food supplies for the road (ARM 13.33 = LAPO 17.588). Another complaint centered on not having millstones to grind the grain (ARM 28.151). Further food supplies might be prepared in the field, as seen in this letter from Shamshi-Adad to Yasmah-Adad.

> Destroy and burn that town, and then, just as I wrote to you in my last letter, leave for Shuda and secure provisions for the troops for one month, to give them confidence. Let the troops rest for a day or two in Shuda, and then leave for Shapanashum. Stay in Shapanashum, where the troops themselves must supply you with your meals, for the troops will have to take provisions for the coming month from Shuda.[425]

Supplies could also be given by villages: "S'il n'y a pas de grain disponible, il faut que l'armée sorte (de la capitale) pour se rendre dans les villages et qu'elle prenne autant de grain qu'il y en a afin de préparer son approvisionnement."[426] Talpush-sharri, a general leading an army, asked

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[421] Maidman, *Nuzi Texts and Their Use as Historical Evidence*, 71.

[422] See more details on this topic and further references to specific letters in Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 34–36; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 201–4; Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 397–405.

[423] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 402.

[424] *ANEHST*, 117.

[425] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 147 (ARM 1.39 = LAPO 17.471); see also ARM 1.35 = LAPO 18.1004 and the stockpiling of barley by Shamshi-Adad in Eidem and Læssøe, *Shemshara Archves 1*, 76.

[426] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 400 (ARM 5.52 = LAPO 17.669).

Kuwari (the ruler of Shusharra and later a vassal of Shamshi-Adad) for grain for the troops.

> (Both) once and twice I have written to you to have grain delivered, but you have not delivered the grain. Now the countries which march to our assistance are coming, and I command the army in Zutlum. Now before the troops come have grain brought quickly, you know indeed that (even) the inner palace is empty, and there is not (even) [*a litre of*] chick peas available! Do not be idle with regard to the grain. Have it brought quickly![427]

Yamsum complained to his lord about unfair division of food provisions by Haya-Sumu, going as far as to suggest that he and Haya-Sumu's general both ate animal fodder (ARM 26.314 = Sasson 3.3.a.iv.1a). Ubariya, a division commander for Mari in Ilan-Sura, requested more flour for soldiers who were becoming mutinous (ARM 26.356). A group of Babylonian officers complained to Zimri-Lim about not getting sufficient rations (FM 6 10 = A.533+ = Sasson 3.3.a.iv.1b).

Yarim-Adad wrote to Zimri-Lim about troop transport and provision. The overseer of the pantry and the overseer of the cooks had met the troops, and the troops received "40 bushels [of flour] for 2 hundred troops, 1 shock for 1 soldier" (ARM 26.369).[428] Yasim-El reported to Zimri-Lim that "the Babylonian troops received 20 liters of grain per person as travel provision" (ARM 26.437). Zakira-Hammu reported to Zimri-Lim that he gave "bread, beer, and grain" to a Zalmaeqan general and his leaders (ARM 27.78). Shortly afterward, he reported that a thousand troops had arrived in Qattunan and he had sent them ahead after he fed their officers with a ram, bread, beer, and grain (ARM 27.80). A letter to Yasmah-Adad from Shasharanum speaks of the lack of beer for the troops. "Au sujet du ravitaillement des soldats, objet de la letter de mon Seigneur, cela fait longtemps que les patrouilles de campagne ne sont plus pourvues de quoi se faire leur bière."[429] A letter from Bahdi-Lim reported that he had recently distributed beer by section (ARM 6.36 = LAPO 17.674). Flour and other kinds of food could be transported by boats (ARM 3.27 = LAPO 17.670).

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[427] Eidem and Læssøe, *Shemshara Archves 1*, 124–25.

[428] Heimpel notes that this bushel was three hundred liters each, and the "shock" was sixty liters; see Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 323–24.

[429] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 112 (ARM 5.61 = LAPO 17.512).

Water often proved to be a problem in the hot climate of Mesopotamia. In a letter from Zimri-Lim to Hatnu-rapi suggesting a coordinated attack on a mutual enemy, Zimri-Lim expressed concern about finding water for the troops: "Where would such a numerous force of men find enough water to drink?"[430] Shamshi-Adad wrote to his son about how to run a campaign, emphasizing the importance of finding water during the campaign for the large amount of men and animals on the campaign. "There will be 20,000 that will go, including donkeys, donkey handlers, army guides; will (water) be enough?" Shamshi-Adad declared that it would be better not to go if a plan to supply water to the troops was not in place; one way to provide water was through the guidance of the Ubrabu-tribesmen who knew where to find water.[431]

3.4.3.4. Assyrian

Since the Assyrian armies traveled so far in their campaigns, supplying water and food for their troops was an essential concern for their troops.[432] Unfortunately, many details relating to the provisioning of the Assyrian troops are unclear, and we can see no more than a glimpse. A letter to Sargon II described the rations consumed by a large army gathered in the city of Kar-Assur.[433]

> And as to the sto[red grain concerning which the ki]ng, my lord, wrote me: ["Send me (data on) the sto]red grain (consumed) by your [*ci*]*ty* in a calendar month!"—we have now itemized the daily (consumption) of pack-animal fodder and stored grain, and are herewith sending (this information) to the king, my lord:
>
> > 470 homers of fodder, 549 homers 4 seahs of [sto]red grain for soldiers, in all 1,019 homers 4 seahs daily, [...].

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[430] Dalley, Walker, and Hawkins, *Old Babylonian Tablets from Tell Al Rimah*, 13.

[431] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 201 (ARM 1.85+ = LAPO 17.449 = Sasson 3.4.a.i).

[432] Frederick Mario Fales and Monica Rigo, "Everyday Life and Food Practices in Assyrian Military Encampments," in *Paleonutrition and Food Practices in the Ancient Near East: Towards a Multidisciplinary Approach*, ed. Lucio Milano, HANE/M 14 (Padova: S.A.R.G.O.N., 2014), 413–37; Fales, "Grain Reserves, Daily Rations, and the Size of the Assyrian Army: A Quantitative Study," *SAAB* 4 (1990): 22–34; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 59–104.

[433] For a detailed discussion of these numbers, see Fales, "Grain Reserves, Daily Rations," 24–27; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 73–76.

> > 108 homers of fodder, 155 ho[mers 6 seahs of sto]red grain for soldiers, in all 263 homers 6 seahs daily, which [. . .] and their cities [. . .] in the province of Lah[iru].
>
> [In all, 57]8 homers of [fodder daily], making[17,3]40 homers of grain rations per month; [in all 705 homers] of stored grain for soldiers daily, (making) [21,150 ho]mers of grain rations per month; [all told, 38,4]90 homers of fodder and stored grain [per month for the k]ing's [men], plus what the magnates [. . .]. (SAA 5.250)

Based on the statement in SAA 1.257 that each person received three seahs of grain, Frederick Mario Fales estimates that each soldier would have received about 600–650 g of bread per day, which means that Kar-Assur would have supported about thirty thousand people and eight thousand animals.[434] The Assyrian army brought their own cooks with them; SAA 5.215 records that 12 confectioners, 7 bakers, and 10 cooks traveled with an army of 630 Assyrians.[435]

Since supplying these things to the troops would have taken time, the Assyrian kings would not allow their troops to drink water when they attempted a rapid attack (as Sargon II mentioned in his battle against Urartu in his eighth campaign).[436] In his pursuit of a rebel (Matiʾ-il), Tiglath-pileser III prevented his troops from resting on the journey. "I marched for [a distance of] seven leag[ues], day and night, and I did not allow the troops of Assyria to rest, did not give (them) water to drink, (and) did not pitch camp nor bivouac my soldiers (allowing them to recover from) their weariness."[437] The reliefs portray a wide variety of activities related to food preparation in military camps, such as the culinary activities in Assurnasirpal II's camp (fig. 3.8).[438] One part of the Balawat gates of Shalmaneser III depicts an Assyrian camp with bakers inside making bread.[439]

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[434] Fales and Rigo, "Everyday Life and Food Practices," 420; Fales, "Grain Reserves, Daily Rations," 28–30.

[435] For the argument that the Assyrian soldiers cooked their own food (based on reliefs that depict this practice), see Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 41.

[436] *COS* 4.42:204; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 798.

[437] RINAP 1.35:85, i.27′–30′.

[438] For many examples (along with pictures of the reliefs themselves), see Fales and Rigo, "Everyday Life and Food Practices," 420–25.

[439] King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 6 (BM 124662).

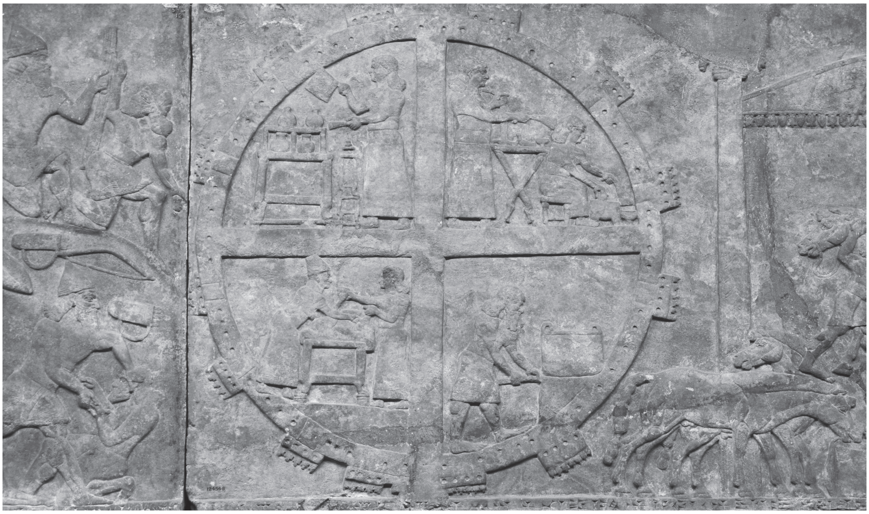

Fig. 3.8. Camp of Assurnasirpal II. BM 124548. Photo courtesy of Gtoffoletto, Wikimedia Commons.

Food could come from several different sources. Close to home, the troops would have been sent out with food and water rations. A letter from Fort Shamaʾuna to Sargon II reported that the only food available was the travel rations (*ṣidissunu*) that the soldiers had brought with them (SAA 17.152). Esarhaddon rushed his troops into battle against his brothers without first gathering these travel rations.[440] Assur-matka-tera reported to Tiglath-pileser III that he had supplied an Aramean troop for a campaign by giving them "(travel) provisions, sackcloth, leather bags, sandals and oil" (SAA 19.17). These provisions would have been largely carried by donkeys or boats.[441]

However, these supplies would not have sustained the troops for the entire campaign. Further out, the troops could have depended upon vassals of the Assyrians to supply them with food, though such a clause is not found in the extant Assyrian treaties and loyalty oaths. In Sargon's eighth campaign, Ullusunnu, "as if he had been one of my own eunuchs or governors of the land of Assyria, had stocked provisions of flour and wine to feed my troops"[442] Sargon II commanded the Babylonian Bullutu to open his gate to Sargon's army during Sargon's campaign against Babylon in 710, presumably to provision his troops (SAA 17.3).

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[440] RINAP 4.1:13, i.63–73.

[441] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 80–83.

Finally, when the army was in enemy lands they could live off the land, taking food and water by force from the local inhabitants.[443] Sennacherib reported that after the defeat of many cities in Babylonia, "I let (my) army eat the grain (and) dates in their gardens, the fields they had labored in, (and) the crops in the countryside, which is their life's necessity."[444] After Sargon II defeated Uishdish in his eighth campaign, he fed his troops on the plunder when he "opened up their innumerable granaries and fed my army unlimited quantities of grain," a statement repeated several times during his journey through enemy territory.[445] He made a similar statement after conquering Sangibutu on the same campaign.

> I had my whole army carry away on horses, mules, camels and donkeys the large storage piles of barley and wheat which they (i.e., the enemy) had accumulated in granaries over a long time for the sustenance of land and people, and I heaped up (the grain) inside my camp like hills. I fed my people abundant food until they were completely full and they joyfully prepared lavish travel provisions for the return march to the land of Assyria.[446]

3.4.3.5. Later Empires

Ninurta-kudurri-usur, a governor of the land of Suhu, defended the land of Laqu when a group of Arameans attacked it. However, his pursuit of the Arameans after the victory was hindered when his troops were thirsty and could not get any water.[447] As quoted in 3.4.1.5, Nebuchadnezzar I described a march through desert territory without water for his troops.[448] It appears that the Neo-Babylonian temples were required to send rations along with the troops that were raised.[449] Several archival texts from Sippar record the amount of rations given to the troops. One of these texts describes the items as "provisions which have been issued to the carpenters who have gone on campaign with the king."[450]

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[442] Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 130; also *COS* 4.42:201; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 794.

[443] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 85–88.

[444] RINAP 3.2:298, 52.

[445] Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 133; also *COS* 4.42:206; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 800.

[446] Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 134.

[447] RIMB 2:296–97, S.0.1002.2, ii.15–21.

Herodotus claimed that Cyrus employed camels to carry food and equipment for his army in Anatolia (*Hist.* 1.80) and that Cyrus brought special water (carried in four wheeled chariots) from the river Choaspes (near Susa) on campaign with him (*Hist.* 1.188). In his campaign against Egypt, Cambyses had water supplied by Arabs who brought it on camels to the Persian army (*Hist.* 3.9). In anger Cambyses decided to attack Ethiopia after his victory in Egypt, but did not prepare food for the campaign. His men progressively ate the pack animals, grass, and finally, each other, at which Cambyses decided to turn back (*Hist.* 3.25).

3.4.3.6. West Semitic

Before going to a battle, El commanded Kirta to prepare food for his troops. "Ready rations for the city, Wheat for the whole house of Khubur. Have bread for five months baked, Provisions for as many as six. Then let the army, supplied (?), go forth, The host of hosts, supplied(?)."[451] No details are provided, but the Israelites were provisioned (כול, *pilpel*) before battle with Ben-Hadad (1 Kgs 20:27). In a later battle against the Moabites, a seven-day march near the Dead Sea left the Israelites without water until YHWH provided them with water miraculously (2 Kgs 3:9–20).

3.5. The King's Role before Battle

As part of the carefully cultivated persona of kings as powerful warriors, they often went on the campaign with the troops against the enemy. Martial texts describe two ways that the king interacted with the troops and the officers before the battle. First, in some cases the king sought counsel from his officers about the best way to fight the battle. Although this was surely a common occurrence, records of this activity in the official documents usually are included only when the king decided to go against the counsel of his generals and follow his own plan. Much more common was seeking counsel from the gods, which will be covered later under divine warriors (§§8.2 and 8.3). Second, the king addressed the officers and the troops before the battle to inspire them to fight courageously and to relay commands to the troops. Although the motif of addressing the army is common, the practical concerns with addressing large armies means that it was most likely more of a literary device. Speaking of Roman times, Adrian Goldsworthy says "the army either marched past the commander or he rode amongst it, addressing smaller sections at one time."[452]

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[448] RIMB 2:34, 2.4.11, i.14–24; also *ANEHST*, 161; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 383–84.

[449] MacGinnis, "Mobilisation and Militarisation," 160; MacGinnis, *Arrows of the Sun*, 39.

[450] MacGinnis, *Arrows of the Sun*, 91 (BM 78828); for another example, see Stefan Zawadzki, "Nebuchadnezzar's Campaign in the 30th Year (575 B.C.): A Conflict with Tyre?," in Cogan, *Treasures on Camels' Humps*, 331–36.

[451] Greenstein, "Kirta," 14–15.

3.5.1. Egyptian

Although they surely they would have listened to their generals on a regular basis, few records remain of such counsel provided to a pharaoh. One example is found in the stela of a marine standard bearer, Khetef, who most likely served under Ramesses II. "I was announced in the presence of His Person to [consult on] every plan of action (?)."[453] More commonly recorded were the times when a pharaoh rebuked his generals. When Thutmose III embarked on his famous assault on Megiddo, he asked for the counsel of his generals when he came to the pass of Megiddo. They suggested that the pass was too dangerous due to its narrowness and the potential of an attack on an exposed part of the army. Instead, they recommended one of two other paths, either to the south at Taanach or to the north at Djefti. They summarize their argument in this way: "Now then, let our victorious lord proceed on whichever of [them] is bes[t in] his opinion, but do not make us go on th[at di]fficult road." However, Thutmose III promptly rejected their advice and decided to take the Megiddo pass; Thutmose III permitted them to take one of their roads they suggested, but they naturally decided to follow him.[454]

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[452] Goldsworthy, *Roman Army at War*, 146.

[453] Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 196.

[454] *COS* 2.2A: 9–10.

The Victory Stela of Piye records several speeches to his troops, mostly to express his frustration with them. After they allowed a rebel king to escape, his mood turned negative and even after they heard of his displeasure and conquered a series of cities, he continued to be angry. "Do they endure while your combat is such that my business is delayed? It is the year for finalizing a conclusion, for placing fear of me in Lower Egypt, and for inflicting upon them a severe and painful defeat by striking."[455] When Piye approached Memphis, he saw that its defenses were strong, leading to his troops offering many suggestions before Piye rebuked them for their ideas. He eventually took the city through a naval attack leading to a siege.

> Every man proceeded to state his opinion among the troops of His Majesty, entailing every tactic of fighting, with every man saying, "Let us lay siege [to Memphis.] Behold, its army is numerous," while others were saying, "Make a ramp against it so that we elevate the ground to its ramparts. Let us put together a (siege) platform, erecting masts and using sails as walls for it. Let us divide it by this means on every side of it, with talus and […] on its north, to elevate the ground to its rampart so that we might find a path for our feet."[456]

Egyptian records preserve a handful of royal speeches before battle. A badly damaged inscription from the beginning of the Middle Kingdom records a speech from an unidentified pharaoh (perhaps Mentuhotep II) to his troops and the replies of his troops.

> (the king addresses his army:) Pharaoh: "… it (? its?) I come and destroy (?). We shall go downstream when we have crushed the foreign lands … asking it of you. I will give you full title to it, everything which ye desire."
>
> And when they had landed in health (?) … (the king's army addresses him): ["… the chiefs of the foreign lands (?) come] to thee bowing, kissing every limb of thine. They heart in thy body reposest."[457]

When Thutmose III arrived at the region south of Megiddo, he gave instructions to his army: "Make your preparations, get your weapons ready because one will engage in fighting with that feeble enemy in the morning, because on […].”[458] Later, after the defeat of the Canaanite army in the field and leading up to the attack on the city of Megiddo, he again addressed his troops: “Capture w[ell], capture w[ell, Oh my vi]ctorious [army!]. Look, [all foreign lands are] are [*sic*] placed [in this city according to the decree] of Re today, because every chieftain of all [northe]rn lands is bottled up within it, and because the capture of Megiddo is the capture of 1000 cities, so capture firmly, capture firmly.”[459]

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[455] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 481.

[456] Ibid., 485–86.

[457] Henry George Fischer, *Inscriptions from the Coptite Nome: Dynasties VI–XI*, AnOr 40 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1964), 112–13.

In a war against the Nubians, Seti I addressed his commanders before he marched to war. “Then His Majesty said to all the leaders, high officials, courtiers, and retinue: ‘What are the wretched Irem(ites), that they should (dare so to) transgress, in the time of My Majesty? It is my father Amen-Re who shall make them fall to the slaughter by My Majesty! I, indeed, have caused any other land to retreat, which has acted thus.’”[460] Ramesses III ordered his troops when the Sea People attacked: “Bring out weapons! Send out troops to destroy the rebellious foreign countries who know not Egypt, by the strength of my father Amun.” Later in the same text the pharaoh passed a message to the troops through a prince: “One speaks thus, namely Pharaoh: ‘Every picked (man) good [(?) at fighting (?)], every brave who is known to (?) his Majesty,—let them pass before Pharaoh, to receive weapons!’”[461]

3.5.2. Hittite

Hittite records concerning kings seeking council or giving speeches before battle are scarce, though one Old Hittite text depicts a Hittite king speaking to his troops before battle (unfortunately the content of the speech is lost).[462] If Hoffner’s thesis that the Hittite kings excelled in their rhetorical ability is correct, then any speeches before battle would have been memorable.[463]

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[458] *COS* 2.2A:11.

[459] *COS* 2.2A:12.

[460] “Nubian War, Amarah West & Sai, Yesr [*sic*] 8 (?), Full Text,” *RITA* 7.Seti I.184:8.

[461] “Campaign against the Sea Peoples: Medinet Habu Scenes, Land Battle,” *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.5:25.

[462] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 299 (*KUB* 36.100 obv. 21–24; *CTH* 14.IV.A).

[463] Harry A. Hoffner, Jr., “‘The King’s Speech’: Royal Rhetorical Language,” in

3.5.3. Early Mesopotamia

Information about the king's role before battle in early Mesopotamia is largely restricted to tales and legends. A legend about Sargon tells the story of conflicting advice between the soldiers of Sargon and the merchants of Purushanda (an Anatolian city). The soldiers think the effort to attack the city would be too much.

> As to the road, O my lord, th[at you wis]h to travel—[it is a month-long, it is dangerous; as to tra]veling, it is arduous. The road to Purušḫanda [that you wish to travel—] the road of which I groan is a task of <seven double-miles>(?). When will we […] sit down on a chair? Will we rest even for a moment [when] our arms have no more strength, (and) our knees have become exhausted from walking the trails?[464]

However, the merchants emphasized the injustice that was being inflicted upon them. Sargon decided to side with the merchants, and the end of the text describes his victory over the king of Purushanda. A tale about Gilgamesh and Aka begins with Gilgamesh asking the city elders about going to war against Kishi, but they rejected his call to arms. However, the young men of the city agreed with Gilgamesh and the war began.[465]

A legend about Sargon the Great begins with his speech to his soldiers to stand tall and defeat the enemy. "[Yo]u were the ones who encouraged me. [Con]cerning Harminarika, [y]ou have informed me. [Co]urage, strength, vigor, heroism—[th]ey have always found you (in battle) since times past. Valor is waiting for you. Take heed of our well-being [whereof I sp]oke! […]! stand tall! proclaim! be pro[ud]! that … approach! seize!"[466] When the Gutian attacked, Utu-hegal delivered a royal speech to his people before going out to fight the enemy. "The god Enlil has given Gutium to me. My lady, the goddess Inanna, is my ally. The god Dumuzi-ama-ušumgal-ana has declared 'It is a matter for me.' The god Gilgameš, son of the goddess Ninsun, has assigned him (Dumuzi) to me as bailiff." The people responded positively to the speech: "He made the citizens of

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Beyond Hatti: A Tribute to Gary Beckman, ed. Billie Jean Collins and Piotr Michalowski (Atlanta: Lockwood, 2013), 137–53.

[464] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 110–15.

[465] Jacobsen, *Harps That Once*, 346–49 (Gilgamesh and Aka).

[466] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 61–64.

Uruk (and) Kullab happy. His city followed him as if they were (just) one person."[467] In the tale of Gilgamesh and Aka, Gilgamesh called on his soldiers to fight the enemy: "Gilgamesh, lord of Kullab, said to its warriors: 'My warriors are all frowning, May one who has heart stand up and say: 'Let me go against Aka!'""[468] The epic of Zimri-Lim quotes him encouraging his troops before battle: "Be strong and press on; the enemy will see your fortitude!"[469]

3.5.4. Assyrian

Although the annals portray the Assyrian king making decisions on his own, a broad group of advisers was available to give him advice in military matters.[470] The extispicy queries showed that Esarhaddon thought the enemy would seek advice: "I ask you, Šamaš, great lord, [whether, should Esar]haddon, [ki]ng of Assyria, [send] the messenger of his choice to g[o to] Kaštaritu, city lord of Karkaššî, [(whether) K]aštaritu, on the advice of his counselors, will seize, q[uestion, and k]ill that me[ssen]ger" (SAA 4.57). A Babylonian text found in the library of Assurbanipal lists various transgressions of a king, including not listening to his scholarly advisors.[471] One letter writer encouraged Tiglath-pileser III to attack the Urartian fortress of Turushpa to establish the king's name (SAA 19.76), but since no such attack is ever recorded apparently this advice was not taken by the king.[472] Bel-ushezib freely offered strategic counsel based on his own observations (SAA 10.111). Since high-ranking officials often went on campaigns with the king, perhaps this kind of advice was more commonly given in personal conversation during the campaign.

Only a few royal speeches are found in Assyrian texts. For example, Shalmaneser III exhorted his officers to encourage the troops before battle.

> [*Divide*] my furious warriors into *companies*, For I am going to plunder on a campaign of the god Aššur. *Have courage* (lit., '[…] your hearts') Let

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[467] RIME 2:286, E2.13.6.4, 65–71.

[468] Jacobsen, *Harps That Once*, 351 (Gilgamesh and Aka).

[469] *COS* 4.51:233 (A.3152+M.5665+).

[470] Karen Radner, "Royal Decision-Making: Kings, Magnates, and Scholars," in Radner, *Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, 358–79.

[471] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 867.

[472] Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 138.

> the swords be sharp [which I put] into your hands, [*I put*] sharp arrows into [your quivers], I [*fasten*] iron armour upon the horses, Do not [*mislead*] your massive forces [*Do not fear*] the warfare of the Urarṭian slave The god Aššur has encouraged me [*to march*] *on the road* [to Urarṭu], The people of Assyria have shouted, [*they have praised my*] *heroism*: '[*Upon you be*] the best of blessings to gain dominion [*over your foes*] March, O lord of kings, *crush* [*the enemies of Aššur*] Let the god Nergal march before you, let the god Girra [*come behind*] At your command [...]!'[473]

3.5.5. Later Empires

Ninurta-kudurri-usur, a governor of the land of Suhu, recorded that the leaders of his enemy, Shamaʾgamni and Iaʾe, addressed their troops before their battle with him.

> Not one among the governors of the land of Sūḫu, his ancestors, (even dared to) go to fight against one thousands Arameans. Now then, this one will (have to) go to fight against two thousand Arameans! If he *comes up* against us, we will go to fight him and take the land of Sūḫu for our own. However, if he does not come up (against us), we will take away booty and draw (more) men to us.[474]

Accounts of kings seeking counsel and giving speeches before battle are largely absent from Babylonian and Persian records, though the Greek sources record a few speeches by Persian kings (i.e., Xenophon, *Cyr.* 2.3.2; 6.2.14–20). In one battle, according to Xenophon, Cyrus rode down the line of troops and addressed small groups of them (*Cyr.* 7.1.10–14).

3.5.6. West Semitic

The account of the competing advisors to Absalom illustrates the need to have trusted advisors. Ahithophel counseled him that he should attack his father David as soon as possible, while Hushai suggested that they should wait to gather more strength. Absalom followed the counsel of Hushai, which was partially to lead to his downfall, as Hushai was David's spy in Absalom's court (2 Sam 17). Although the book of Kings does not record any royal speeches before battle, the story of the defeat of Jericho includes a speech from Joshua delivered to the people before the battle (Josh 6:16–19). Likewise, according to Judges Gideon sought to encourage the troops before battle with the Midianites: "Get up; for the Lord has given the army of Midian into your hand" (Judg 7:15).

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[473] RIMA 3:86, A.0.102.17, 18–30.

[474] RIMB 2:295, S.0.1002.2, 19–24.

3.6. Preparing Defenses

> First they assessed the length as the number of *chang* [about eight feet], estimated the height [of the ground] as high or low, measured the thickness and thinness, plumbed the depths of the moat and ditch, graded the soil, determined [where to acquire the required materials], estimated the time required for the work, calculated the number of soldiers and ordinary workers to be employed, pondered the materials that would be used, and recorded the amount of provisions in order to mandate the amount of work for each of the feudal lords.
>
> —Tso Chuan[475]

Although most of this chapter has focused on the preparation of the attackers for battle, some attention must also be given to the defenders. In some areas, such as mustering troops and rituals, the preparation was similar. But the march to war was usually restricted to the attackers, except when the defenders marched to a field of battle where they felt they could defend themselves more easily against a larger and more powerful army, a tactic that will be covered in §4.1. But usually the defenders prepared themselves for battle primarily by strengthening their fortifications.

Although most of this book necessarily focuses on textual and visual evidence to learn about warfare, the area of fortifications is one where we can learn much from archaeological study.[476] Since building these fortifications would have required extensive labor and effort, great fortifications were built only where they were needed, leading empires to build them on their frontiers and allow the ones in the center of their empires to gradually degrade.[477] Earthen ramparts were a common feature of fortifications and averaged about ten meters tall in the Levant. Walls built out of mud brick and stone also played an important role in fortifications.[478] Towers were often added to the walls to reduce the dead zone that archers would not be able to defend from the walls.[479] Outside of the wall, a trench was sometimes built to hinder the advancement of attackers, though usually this was not filled with water (called a fosse rather than a moat).[480] Finally, the defenders needed to ensure they had access to water during a siege, necessitating the building of extensive water systems at many sites.[481]

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[475] Ralph D. Sawyer, *Ancient Chinese Warfare* (New York: Basic Books, 2011), 54.

[476] For an introduction to fortifications (although he focuses on fortifications in the Levant), see Aaron A. Burke, *"Walled Up To Heaven": The Evolution of Middle Bronze Age Fortifications Strategies in the Levant*, SAHL 4 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 48–73.

[477] For a study of such topics as the source of the labor and how fast they could work, see ibid., 141–58; for building on the frontier, see Heather D. Baker, "Babylonian

The weakest point in the defensive structure was the gate, since it had to allow for a smooth flow of traffic during times of peace. Although many have seen various aspects of a gate in strictly military terms, such as the three-chambered gatehouses or the right-hand approaches, many of these features had other explanations (such as the chambers being a support for the roof beams and the approach moving parallel to the wall to avoid steep inclines).[482] Along with its military functions, the gate complex was the center of civic life.[483]

City Walls in a Historical and Cross-Cultural Perspective," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 87–88.

[478] For a study of the nonmilitary functions of walls based on Babylonian city walls that are also applicable for many other areas (defining urban space, flood barrier, barrier for taxation, etc.), see Baker, "Babylonian City Walls."

[479] For a study of towers in Mesopotamia, see Laura Battini, "Les tours à caractère militaire dans la Mésopotamie antique," in *La guerra en el Oriente proximo y Egypto antiguos: Evidencias, historia y tendencias cientificas en la investigacion moderna*, ed. M. Alonso Baquer et al. (Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2003), 137–55.

[480] Burke, *Walled Up To Heaven*, 57–59; Dag Oredsson, *Moats in Ancient Palestine*, ConBOT 48 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2000).

[481] For a survey of these water systems in Israel (with many pictures), see Tsvika Tsuk, *Water at the End of the Tunnel: Touring Israel's Ancient Water Systems* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 2011).

[482] Daniel A. Frese, "Chambered Gatehouses in the Iron II Southern Levant: Their Architecture and Function," *Levant* 47 (2015): 75–92; Frese, "The Civic Forum in Ancient Israel: The Form, Function, and Symbolism of City Gates" (PhD diss., University of California, San Diego, 2012), 266–70.

[483] For more on the role of gates, see Natalie Naomi May, "City Gates and Their Functions in Mesopotamia and Ancient Israel," in *The Fabric of Cities: Aspects of Urbanism, Urban Topography and Society in Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome*, ed. Natalie Naomi May and Ulrike Steinert, CHANE 68 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 77–122; Frese, "Civic Forum in Ancient Israel"; Laura Battini, "Les portes urbaines mésopotamiennes: Dynamique militaire et utilitaire," *HiMA* 3 (2016): 223–47.

3.6.1. Egypt

Egypt primarily built fortresses (usually built of mud brick) at its borders, including in the south against Nubian attacks, in the west against the Libyans, and in the northeast against Asiatics.[484] These fortresses ranged in size from towers to small forts to larger fortifications.[485] The fortresses in the south were focused on the Nile and often included river gates to allow access to the Nile; one of the most famous of these fortresses was at Buhen.[486] Sesostris III set up a boundary stela at the second cataract to mark the boundary at this time.[487] A close eye was kept on the frontiers and who was crossing the boundaries, as illustrated by a model letter (in P.Anast. 6) that reported the movement of nomadic Shasu tribes past a border fortress to allow them access to water.[488] Another letter reported that a frontier patrol in the desert near Nubia had found the track of thirty-two men and three donkeys.[489]

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[484] For fortifications in Egypt, see A. W. Lawrence, "Ancient Egyptian Fortifications," *JEA* 51 (1965): 69–94; Ann Foster, "Forts and Garrisons,"*OEAE* 2:553–58; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 127–48; Carola Vogel, *Ägyptische Festungen und Garnisonen bis zum Ende des Mittleren Reiches*, HÄB 46 (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 2004); Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 325–26, 360–61, 440–46; Carola Vogel, "Das ägyptische Festungssystem bis zum Ende des Neuen Reiches," in *Militärgeschichte des pharaonischen Ägypten: Altägypten und seine Nachbarkulturen im Spiegel aktueller Forschung*, ed. Rolf Gundlach and Carola Vogel, Krieg in der Geschichte 34 (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2009), 165–85; Vogel, *Fortifications of Ancient Egypt*; Friederike Jesse and Carola Vogel, eds., *The Power of Walls—Fortifications in Ancient Northeastern Africa: Proceedings of the International Workshop Held at the University of Cologne 4th–7th August 2011*, Colloquium Africanum 5 (Köln: Heinrich, 2013).

[485] Towers: a game piece from the first dynasty of Egypt in the British Museum (EA 35525) illustrates such a watchtower; for an artist's reconstruction of such a tower, see Vogel, *Fortifications of Ancient Egypt*, 19. Small forts: see the artist's reconstruction of a small circular fort (made of limestone) in south Sinai in ibid., 9. Larger fortifications: For more on these forts in Sinai, see Eliezer D. Oren, "The 'Ways of Horus' in North Sinai," in *Egypt, Israel, Sinai: Archaeological and Historical Relationships in the Biblical Period*, ed. Anson F. Rainey (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1987), 69–120; James K. Hoffmeier and Stephen O. Moshier, "'The Ways of Horus': Reconstructing Egypt's East Frontier Defense Network and the Military Road to Canaan in New Kingdom Times," in *Tell El-Borg I: The "Dwelling of the Lion" on the Ways of Horus*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 34–61; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 211–20.

[486] See artist's reconstructions of such fortifications in Vogel, *Fortifications of Ancient Egypt*, 24, 29, 33.

[487] *AEL* 1:119–20 (Berlin Musuem 1157); Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt*, 45.

The pharaohs sometimes spoke of building great walls. Ramesses III recorded in P.Harris that he built such a great wall. “I made a very great wall in the country of Ayan (*ʿyn*ʾ). It was surrounded by a wall like a mountain of gritstone, with 20 ⌜courses⌝ in the ground foundation, and a height of 30 cubits, having battlements. Its doorposts and doors were hewn of cedar, their bolts were of copper, with mountings.”[490] The Egyptian military ranks included several high positions that oversaw forts, including a fort-officer and a garrison-officer. A scribe of a fort is also attested.[491] Chariot-warriors could be part of a garrison.[492]

3.6.2. Hittite

The Hittites developed impressive fortifications in many of their cities.[493] The walls were usually made of timber and mud bricks based on a stone wall foundation.[494] In contrast to Egypt, all the mud bricks have washed away over the years, leaving only the stone wall base today. Most Hittite walls were casemate walls and employed more towers than other cultures (figs. 3.9 and 3.10). Tunnels have been found under the city walls of Hattusa and a few other Hittite cities, perhaps built so troops inside the city could leave the city to fight an enemy or as a trap for enemy troops attempting to enter. Ramparts were included in a few places, perhaps to make it more difficult for enemy troops and siege equipment to reach the city walls. Several gates are still visible at Hattusa today, including the Lion

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[488] *COS* 3.5:16–17.

[489] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 72 (P.BM 10752).

[490] *ARE* 4:202–3; see also Burke, *Walled Up To Heaven*, 60; Grandet, *Papyrus Harris I*, 1:338.

[491] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 39–40, 45–46.

[492] Ibid., 59.

[493] Rudolf Naumann, *Architektur Kleinasiens von ihren Anfängen bis zum Ende der hethitischen Zeit*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Wasmuth, 1971); Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 24–27; Konstantin Nossov, *Hittite Fortifications c. 1650–700 BC*, Fortress 73 (Oxford: Osprey, 2008); Dirk Paul Mielke, “Hittite Cities: Looking for a Concept,” in Genz, *Insights into Hittite History*, 178–82.

[494] For an artist’s reconstruction (with part of the wall exposed to see the interior), see Nossov, *Hittite Fortifications*, 11.

Gate and the King's Gate. The gates had an inner and outer door, with a small area between them.[495] The figure at the King's Gate was thought to be a king when it was first discovered, but is now generally thought to be a deity, perhaps standing to bless the armies leaving the gate.[496]

The role of border garrisons was important for the Hittites, as they were often attacked from all directions and had to keep a constant vigil. Suppiluliuma built forts on the far side of towns that had been conquered by the Kaska, allowing the people to return.[497] The Deeds of Suppiluliuma refers to a corps of engineers that was fortifying a city.[498] The frontier post governors (*auwariyas isḫas*; lit., the lord of the watchtower) were given detailed instructions, including keeping a watch on the town (he could never be gone more than three days), reporting on enemy movement, building fortifications, provisioning the town, performing religious duties, and a variety of other duties.[499] Part of the instructions describes how to build fortifications, but it is fragmentary and difficult to understand. If he builds in a town that is easily reached, "he shall during that time bu[(ild) very quic(kly), and] he shall [de]fend [them]."[500] The section also includes a reference to a trench (§22) and to the danger of torches around wood towers (§26). Although it comes from the Neo-Hittite period, the fortress at Karatepe provides a good model of what a Hittite border fortress would have looked like.[501]

The protocol for the royal bodyguards includes further details about guard duty among the Hittites. The rules for the guards at the palace were very detailed, including such points as the procedure for guards who wished to go to the bathroom and what the guards should do when the king mounts his chariot.

> And a bodyguard [does not (just) go] outside on his own volition. If he really has to pee, then he will run after the whole [bo]dyguard, and he will tell the b[od]yguard who stands before him, "I have to go down to the toilet," then that one passes it on to another bodyguard, then that one

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[495] For an artist's reconstruction of these two gates, see ibid., 27.

[496] Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 16.

[497] *COS* 1.74:186 (*CTH* 40).

[498] *COS* 1.74:189 (*CTH* 40).

[499] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 212–37 (*CTH* 261.I); see also *COS* 1.84:221–25.

[500] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 221 (*CTH* 26).

[501] Nossov, *Hittite Fortifications*, 41, 46.

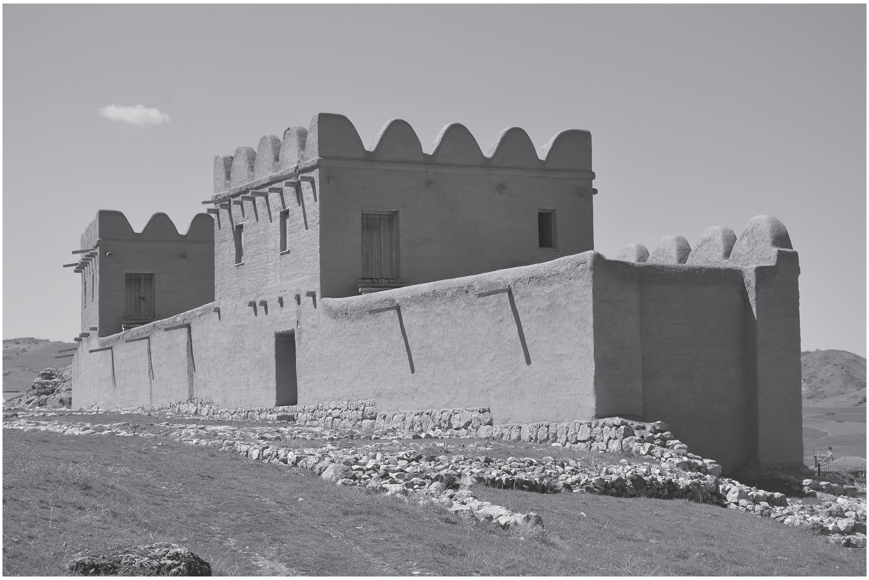

Fig. 3.9. Reconstructed wall at Hattusa. Boghazköy, Turkey. Photo courtesy of Carole Raddato, Wikimedia Commons.

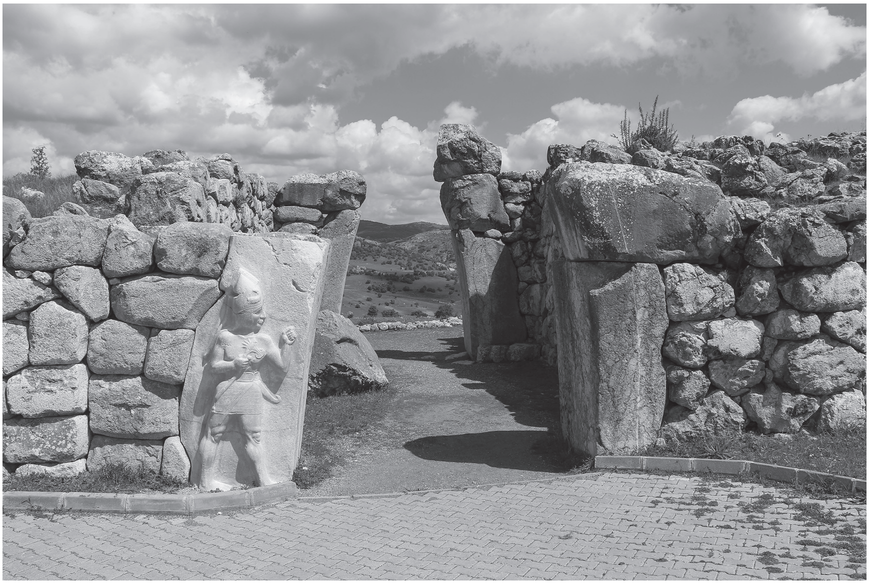

Fig. 3.10. King's Gate at Hattusa. Boghazköy, Turkey. Photo courtesy of Bernard Gagnon, Wikimedia Commons.

> passes it on to a man of third rank, then the man of third rank tells a man of second rank, then the man of second rank tells the commander-of-10 of the bodyguard. If the chief of the bod[yg]uard is also present, (i.e.,) he is in the [cou]rt of the bodyguard, then the [co]mann[der-of-10 of the bodygua]rd conveys it to the chief of the bodyguard, (asking), "May he [g]o down to the toilet?" And the chief of the bodyguard will say, "He may go." If, however, anyone's *bowels are troubling him*, then one colleague tells another colleague, so that this, too, reaches the chief of the bodyguard (thus): "May he go pee?" Then the chief of the bodyguard will say, "He may go." Whatever bodygua[rd] goes to pee (without asking), [th]ough, His Majesty will take note of, so that the pissing affair will reach the palace; he does not (just) go on his own volition.[502]

The Hittites also recorded that they placed garrison troops in a variety of places, especially those that had been recently conquered or were in danger of rebelling against the Hittites.[503] One way to determine where to fortify was through oracles, as illustrated by this example: "Should we send immediately to fortify the city of Kammamma? And is that favorable? Result: deferred."[504] Hittite had a variety of words for guards, though the differences between them cannot always be determined.[505]

3.6.3. Early Mesopotamian

Ur-Nanshe, an early king at Lagash, said that he "built the wall of Lagaš."[506] Naram-Sin describes the fortifications of Armanum (a city he took in Syria) in terms of the distance that the troops covered in their assault on the city. The inscription might depict a two-pronged assault (one from land and one from sea).

> From the fortification wall to the great wall, 130 cubits is the ascent of the citadel, 44 cubits is the ascent of the wall. From the wall of the port to the fortification wall, 180 cubits is the ascent of the citadel, 30 cubits

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[502] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 104–7 (*CTH* 262); see also *COS* 1.85:226; Güterbock and van den Hout, *Hittite Instruction for the Royal Bodyguard*, 8–9.

[503] For more on these troops, see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 231–37.

[504] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline, *Ahhiyawa Texts*, 221.

[505] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 246–76.

[506] RIME 1:107, E.1.9.1.20, iv.4–5.

> is the ascent of the wall. Total: 404 cubits ascent from the ground to the top of the fortress.
>
> From the river to the wall of the port: 196 cubits is the ascent of the citadel, 20 cubits is the ascent of the wall. From the wall of the port to the fortification wall: 156 cubits is the ascent of the citadel, 30 cubits is the ascent of the wall.[507]

A third-millennium Akkadian letter (dating to the reign of Naram-Sin's son Shar-kali-sharri) by Ishkun-Dagan to field hands tells them to work in the fields after they have posted guards, but they could bring their sheep into town.

> Work the fields and guard the flocks! Just don't say to me: "It is (the fault of) the Gutians; I could not work the land!" Man *outposts* every mile, and then you will be able to work the land! If the soldiers attack, you can raise help and have the herd brought into the city. In the event that (you tell me) "the Gutians have rustled the flock," I will say nothing about it and (just) pay you the money. Look here, I swear by the life of (King) Shar-kali-sharri that if the Gutians rustle the flocks, and you have to pay from your own assets, I will (re)pay you the money when I arrive in town. But even if you don't succeed in guarding the herds, I will ask you for the correct (amount) of the field rent (that you owe me)! … you should know (this)![508]

Shu-Sin, a king of Ur in the twenty-first century, constructed a lengthy wall and named it "It keeps Tidnum at bay," referring to his attempt to keep the Amorites out of his land.[509] In a letter to Shulgi, the king of Ur in ca. 2000, Puzur-Shulgi, relates the difficulty he had in fortifying his region and asked the king for more workers.

> The enemy has concentrated (all his forces) for battle but my forces are insufficient (to keep them off). It is impossible to strengthen the fortifications against him, nor (properly) guard it. In the sector under the

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[507] Benjamin R. Foster, "The Siege of Armanum," *JANESCU* 14 (1982): 32 (RIME 2:135, E2.1.4.26, iv.20–vi.17); for a potential schematic drawing of their path, see ibid., 35.

[508] Michalowski, *Letters from Early Mesopotamia*, 28; also *ANEHST*, 21; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 70.

[509] RIME 3.2:290; for historical context, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 116.

> responsibility of Puzur-Numušda, governor of Ullum-ṣeḫ̮rum, a 300 m. section had sagged and collapsed in the middle; in the sector under the responsibility of Lugal-melam, the overseer of the Šeššektum canal, 30 m. of his section can be breached; in the sector under the responsibility of Kakugani, governor of the inland territory, a 210 m. section, its face and base are badly damaged, (and) in the part under the responsibility of Takil-ilišu, canal inspector of the Abgal and Me-Enlila waterways, 240 m. of his section does not have its perimeter laid out yet. Although I cannot know ahead of time when the enemy will advance against (the fortifications), (it is evident) that the enemy has concentrated (all) his forces for battle, and his troops are encamped in the mountain valleys.
>
> If my king is agreeable, he will raise for me a very large contingent (viz., 7200) of workers and send them here immediately. Seventy Sudalunutum troopers should also come here to me. I am resolved, and so I shall dislodge them (i.e., the enemy), so let this be known, for his (the enemy's) sins have been grievous from (primeval) night to the end of days! (Be assured), I am the true servant of my lord Šulgi, and I will definitely finish (this work)! Now my king is informed (about all of this)![510]

The Babylonian king Samsu-iluna built a fortress to protect his people. "He dug up its (surrounding) moat, piled up its earth there, formed its bricks, (and) built its wall. He raised its head like a mountain."[511] The fortifications at Mari were important for the defense of the city.[512] Hammurabi fortified Sippar, including a plain surrounding the city that could be flooded to turn it into a marsh when the enemy approached.[513] He also built an impressive wall in Sippar. "I raised the top of the foundation of the wall of Sippar with earth (until it was) like a great mountain. I built (that) high wall. That which from the past no king among the kings had built, for the god Šamaš, my lord I grandly built. The name of that wall is 'By the decree of the god Šamaš, may Ḫammu-rāpi have no rival.'"[514] Bahdi-Lim wrote to Zimri-Lim about the fortifications of Karana, reporting that, "the wall is enclosed within a glacis? (*šulḫum*), while the palace is encircled by a glacis as well as a moat (*ḫirītum*). The (garrison) troops that are staying, should they guard the wall, the gate, or the palace?"[515] The use of a fosse as a defensive feature might have originated in Mesopotamia from the canal system that brought water to crops, though it appears that many of the fosses were never designed to hold water.[516]

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[510] Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur*, 353. For the first part of the letter, see §3.2.3; for a similar request for workers (from the same time period) to build fortifications and defend against encroaching enemies, see the letter from Sharrumbani to Shu-Sin, ibid., 398–400; also *ANEHST*, 79.

[511] RIME 4:390–91, 4.3.7.8, 70–76; see also *COS* 2.108:258.

[512] For more on the defense preparations of Mari, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 3–7; Jordi Vidal and Juan-Luis Montero Fenollós, "The Fortification System in Tell Abu Fahd (Syrian Euphrates Valley)," in *Reconstructing a Distant Past: Ancient Near Eastern Essays in Tribute to Jorge R. Silva Castillo*, ed. Diego A. Barreyra Fracaroli and Gregorio del Olm Lete, AuOrSup 25 (Barcelona: Ausa, 2009), 205–20; Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 289–94.

[513] RIME 4:348–49, 4.3.6.12.

Shamshi-Adad, writing to Ishi-Adad about a neighbor raiding him, counseled that he should gather his people into a fortified town (ARM 1.24+ = LAPO 16.330 = Sasson 3.2.c.iii.). Likewise, Hasidanum instructed Yasmah-Adad to bring those in the vicinity of the Karana and Qattara, two fortified cities, into the cities when attacked (ARM 5.37 = LAPO 17.510 = Sasson 3.5.a.i.note). Guards played an important role in defending the city. Ashqudum described for Zimri-Lim the guard of the city, including what appear to be several upper class men who served themselves rather than buying substitutes (ARM 26.54). One letter describes how the people had gathered in a citadel to save themselves when attacked (ARM 26.422). Shamshi-Adad told his son Yasmah-Adad to attack a town because its walls were not very big. "Alatrû est un endroit fortifié (mais) sa muraille est ancienne et ils n'en ont pas du tout fait une autre. Je connais très bien cette ville. J'y suis passé devant au moins à 3 reprises. En ce qui concerne son tell, il ne faudrait pas croire qu'il est élevé: sa muraille est de taille moyenne. Cette ville ne tiendra pas. Il est sûr que tu pourras l'annexer."[517] One unfortunate letter writer reported to Zimri-Lim that he had strengthened the defenses of his town, but a flood had removed them (ARM 28.49 = Sasson 1.1.d.ii.1.note).

The Babylonian king Ammi-Saduqa (seventeenth century) commanded the town Sippar-Yahrurum to stand guard against marauders. The official Marduk-mushallim took these commands very seriously, and complained to a superior about his colleague Marduk-lamassashu, who did not take them as seriously.

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[514] RIME 4:335, E4.3.6.2, 41–55.

[515] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 209 (ARM 6.29 = LAPO 17.597 = Sasson 3.5.a.ii).

[516] Burke, *Walled Up To Heaven*, 58–59.

[517] Durand, D*ocuments épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 48 (ARM 1.30 = LAPO 471 = Sasson 4.3.d).

> Speak to my superior: thus (says) Marduk-mušallim. As I have informed my lord in my tablet, the tablet of the king with instructions that is brought to us says:
>
> “The city gate must not be opened as long as the sun does not rise. When the sun stands (on the horizon; i.e., dusk) it must be closed. The labour force that works outside must be questioned. The guards must be strong. The Manahean (troops) must not come down from the city wall. One must quickly move the large and small cattle that pasture in the territory of Sippar-Yahrurum to the countryside. The enemy troops must not strike! If the enemy troops will strike, you (pl.) will not be pardoned; it will be settled with your lives.”
>
> Thus we are informed. By the actions of Marduk-lamassašu, the barber, the city gate is opened before the sun rises and closed too late. I close the city gate myself by (the light of) a torch and enter. I protest, but he says (to the gatekeepers): “Do not follow his (i.e., Marduk-mušallim) orders!” In order to avoid a brawl, I give up in this matter time and again, but, out of fear for you, my lord, I keep it close in mind. If now an error should occur, who will then be able to clear the liability? It will be discussed! They will for sure examine us!
>
> The generals were negligent this year. They did not get their troops ready and they are now not available. And the troops are still staying in their villages and busy doing (other things). Thus I informed you, my lord, in my tablet. That tablet of mine, saying “Herewith I send a message (that) clears (my) liability,” I had a servant of my lord bring to my lord, (but) my lord did not hear (it) at all. Now, what has been done on the twenty-second day of the eighth month is not suitable for the king or you, my lord, to hear: large and small cattle grazed in the city gate, the gatekeepers did not close (the gate) until one-third part of a night watch had passed. My lord may ask Gimil-Marduk, the messenger who brought the cash boxes here. I have offered you, my lord, warnings all the time. Should this year some grave error occur, then I have sent a message for my lord to hear.[518]

3.6.4. Assyrian

Even though the Assyrians often terrorized other peoples, they prepared their own defenses as well. Several of the great gates of Nineveh have been reconstructed today to allow visitors to experience a glimpse of the power of the ancient city (fig. 3.11). The Halzi gate at Nineveh has been excavated to reveal many skeletons of Assyrian soldiers and children killed in the conquest of Assyria by the Babylonians in 612.[519] Shalmaneser III rebuilt the walls of the city Assur. "I delineated their area, dug out their foundation pit, (and) completely rebuilt them on bedrock from bottom to top. <*I deposited*> my monumental inscription (and) returned the monumental inscriptions of the kings, my fathers, to their places."[520] Sargon II indulged in gematria when he described a wall he built for his new city Dur-Sharrukin when he "made the measure of its (perimeter) wall 16,283 cubits, my name."[521] Many years later, Sennacherib expanded and fortified Nineveh. "I opened up a foundation pit for the outer wall, Badnigerimḫuluḫa, (which means) "Terrorizer of Enemies," then I dug down forty-five *nindanu* and made (it) reach the water table. I bound together strong mountain stone in the water below and above I expertly carried out its construction with large limestone (blocks) up to its copings."[522] Enemies were not the only danger to city walls; after an earthquake in Dur-Sharruken an official inquired whether any damage had been done to the city wall there (SAA 1.125).

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[518] *ANEHST*, 131–32.

More commonly, the Assyrian records spoke of fortifying and guarding outposts in enemy lands, though these fortresses further away from the heartland tended to be smaller.[523] Sargon II boasted that he fortified several cities "as outposts toward Urartu."[524] Ashipa reported to Sargon II on preparing for battle with Urartu, including keeping a close watch on the enemy, gathering the people inside fortified places, and relocating the oxen and sheep to the near side of the river (SAA 5.21).

The letters contain a few references to chiefs of the fort or fortresses.[525] Sargon II instructed a subordinate in Babylon how to prepare living

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[519] Diana Pickworth, "Excavations at Nineveh: The Halzi Gate," *Iraq* 67 (2005): 295–316.

[520] RIMA 3:98, A.0.102.25, 26–31.

[521] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 91.

[522] RINAP 3.1:104, 15, vii.24′–29′.

[523] Bradley J. Parker, "Garrisoning the Empire: Aspects of the Construction and Maintenance of Forts on the Assyrian Frontier," *Iraq* 59 (1997): 77–78; Laura Battini, "Lorsqu'une ville est en état de siège: étude de cas néo-assyriens," in *Les armées du Proche-Orient ancien (IIIe–Ier mill. av. J.-C.): Actes du colloque international organisé à Lyon les 1er et 2 décembre 2006, Maison de l'Orient et de la Méditerranée*, ed. Philippe Abrahami and Laura Battini, BARIS 1855 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008), 190–92.

[524] *ARAB* 2:12, §27; see also *ARAB* 2:78, where he fortified cities against the lands of Zikirtu and Andia.

[525] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 124–25.

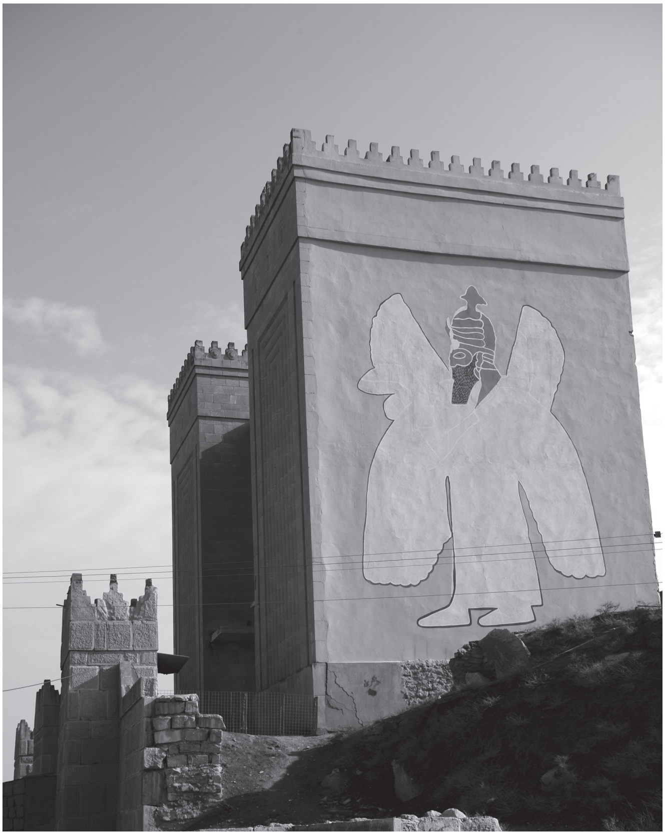

Fig. 3.11. Nergal Gate in Nineveh. Mosul (Nineveh), Iraq. Photo courtesy of JoAnn S. Makinano, Wikimedia Commons.

quarters and defenses in hostile territory: he was to build a moat around the fortress, provide reed huts for the men, and then dig a moat on the other side of the huts so the huts were between the moats (SAA 1.18). Qurdi-Assur-lamur wrote to Tiglath-pileser III about creating a garrison for the people of Kashpuna.

> Concerning the people of Kašpuna about whom the king said: "*What have you given them for their safety*?" Even before they wrote to me from the Palace, I had already started the work and performed it; afterwards, they sent me a sealed document. (Even if) it had not come to me, *yet I had raised* (*my*) *hands as for* erecting towers but I did not construct the city-gate of the inner *quarters*. (But after receiving the sealed document) I immediately dropped (everything), took over their king's men and they

> came with me. I appointed a eunuch over them as fort commander and made 30 [Š]iʾanean men to enter there. They will keep the w[at]ch, and release them thus by 30 men. (SAA 19.22 = ND 2715)[526]

One letter writer said that he was including a drawing of the fort on leather and sending it along with the letter, though the drawing has not survived (SAA 15.136). The governor Il-yadaʾ reported to Sargon II on building, supplying, and manning a fort in northern Babylon.

> The magnates have built the fo[rt] of Minuʾ. They raised 1,000 homers of barley from the fort of the Luhut[eans] and stored it there. I have placed there 10 homers of salt, 16 […s] of *kudimmu* salt, 30 jugs of oil, 18 jugs of naphtha, 30 bows, 20,000 […] arrows, 10,000 *arrow-shafts*, 100 […], two talents of […] wool, and three talents of …, and have appointed my o[ff]icial there accompanied by 100 Ituʾaens and the Gurreans of the Palace. (SAA 15.166)

Duri-Assur (governor of Tushhan) described for Tiglath-pileser III the work of building a fortress in some detail.[527]

> [A]s to the work about which the king, my lord, wrote to me, the (protective) wall is finished. The *father*(*s*) have performed the king's *naṭu* ritual. The river wood has been cut and *broken pieces* have been smeared (with) bitumen. 28 wooden *stockades* have been placed, the door of the main gate has been installed and the *key* and loc[k] have been made. The drainage pipes of the courtyard have been coated with bitumen. The […] of the *dariku*-container has been installed. The rest of the *barracks* have been completely built and roofed. I am (also) completely building *the s*[*to*]*rehouse of* … [*I shall glaze*] burn[t b]ricks and coat [*them*] with bitumen. The storehouses for the garrison troops have been completely built. They are plastering the roofs, installing the gutters and paving the yards. The outer pool is excellent. Inside, the water from the lagoon of the Tigris is good. Let the king, my lord, come and have a look. I am bringing the *subsoil* ploughs, *šugurru-mats*, bitumen, *hamartu* and the cattle into the garrison and arranging them. [L]et the garrison troops come and enter the garrison. (SAA 19.60)

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[526] For more on references to garrison troops and forts in Assyrian letters, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 78–81.

[527] For a study of this text, see Parker, "Garrisoning the Empire"; Parker, *Mechanics of Empire*, 140–44.

The Assyrians sometimes refer to other means of defense, such as a moat. These additional defensive measures would be built after the wall was completed, as indicated in SAA 19.45. Sennacherib rebuilt the town of Sur-marrati after he won the battle of Halule. "I greatly enlarged the site of the city, had its wall built new, and raised (it) as high as a mountain. Beside the wall, I dug a moat around its (entire) circumference."[528] Tukulti-Ninurta I described building a moat around his city. "I dug a large moat around the wall—a large moat which no king who preceded me had previously built. The bottom of the moat I cut into bedrock with copper picks. Twenty *mušaru* down I reached water level."[529] A letter refers to digging a moat near the outer wall of a city. "Perhaps the king, my lord, will say: "Where are they digging the moat?" The outer wall has been … (and) I have finished the moat. [*They will dig*] another moat on t[his] side [of the outer wal]l" (SAA 19.26 = ND 2737).

3.6.5. Later Empires

Sargon II recorded an attempt by Merodach-baladan to defend Dur-Yakin by digging a large moat outside the walls and filling it with water.[530] Babylon had powerful walls during the time of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. The Ishtar Gate has been extensively restored and can be seen in the Pergamum Museum in Berlin today, and various parts of the gate depicting lions can be seen in other museums throughout the world (fig. 3.12). The walls have also been partially reconstructed in Babylon itself (fig. 3.13). The Babylonian king Nabopolassar explained in great detail the building of the defensive wall of Babylon.

> At that time, I, Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, the one who makes Nabû and Marduk happy, (for) the Imgur-Enlil—the great wall of Babylon, the prime boundary-post which has been made manifest since distant times, the solid border as ancient as the remote ages, the high mountain peak which rivals the heavens, the strong shield that bolts the entrance to the hostile lands, the wide courtyard of the Igigi, the broad patio of

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[528] RINAP 3.2:335, 230, 118–119.

[529] RIMA 1:267, A.0.78.19, 6–7.

[530] *ARAB* 2:19, §39; Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 333. For short study of these defenses (with the estimate that it would have taken three and a half months for ten thousand men to finish these defenses), see M. A. Powell, "Merodach-Baladan at Dur-Jakin: A Note on the Defense of Babylonian Cities," *JCS* 34 (1982): 59–61.

> the Anunnaki, the stairway to heaven, the ladder down to Ganṣir, the station of Lugalirra and Meslamtaea, the outdoor shrine of the great queen Ištar, the emplacement of the bow of the hero Dagan, the camp enclosure of warrior Ninurta, the temple of the divine protection of Anu and Enlil, the place of the skillful plan of Ea the lord of Eridu, the fortified ground of the great gods, whose foundations the Igigi and the Anunnaki had installed with the joy of their hearts, (whose work) they had carried out skillfully and (which) they had raised to its top, (which) with the passing of time had become weak and caved in, whose walls had been carried away by rain and heavy storms (and) whose foundations had heaped up and accumulated into a pile of ruins—I called up the workers of Enlil, Šamaš, and Marduk, I made them carry the hoe, I laid (on them) the *tupšikku*-basket. From (one) bank of the Arahtu (Euphrates) on the upper (northern) side, that of the Ištar-Gate, to the (other) bank of the Arahtu (Euphrates), on the lower (southern) side, that of the Uraš-Gate, I took its accumulated debris away, I made a careful survey and examined its old foundation platform and laid its brickwork in the original place: I grounded its base on the breast of the netherworld. I surrounded the East Bank with a mighty (mountainous) belt.[531]

The Persian kings continued to build fortifications and support garrisons, especially at strategic points in their empire.[532] Darius recorded that he built a fortress in Susa. "By the favour of Auramazda, there was much earlier building which was not in a good state; at Susa I saw that the fortress had collapsed; then I built there another fortress."[533] Herodotus reported that Darius had built a fortress in Thrace (*Hist.* 7.59).

3.6.6. West Semitic

In the West Semitic world with its many smaller kingdoms, fortifications were often found near important international roads as the regional kings attempted to hold their territory against each other and against the invading empires. Due to the importance of these fortifications for biblical

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[531] Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar, Amel-Marduk, and Neriglissar*, 96–97; also *COS* 2.121:307–8; Herodotus also described the fortifications of Babylon (*Hist.* 1.178–81).

[532] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 66, 374–76.

[533] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 491 (DSe); for background on this building, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 165–68.

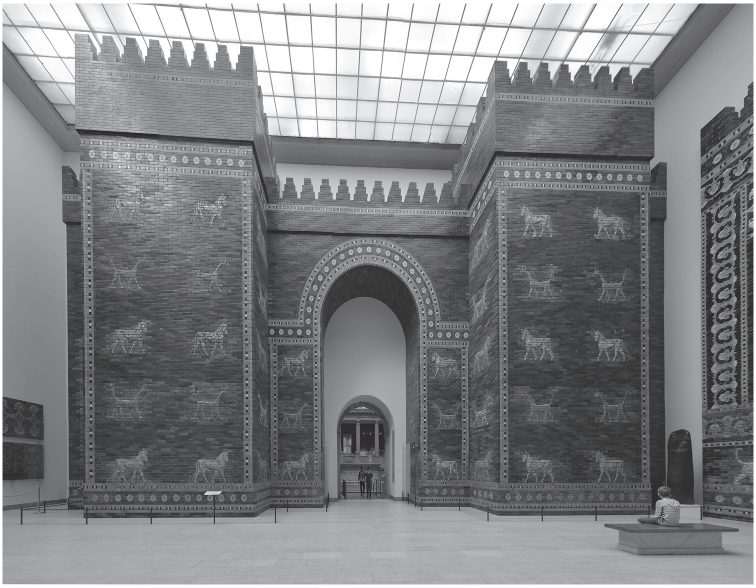

Fig. 3.12. Ishtar Gate at Babylon. Pergamum Museum, Berlin. Photo courtesy of Radomir Vrbovsky, Wikimedia Commons.

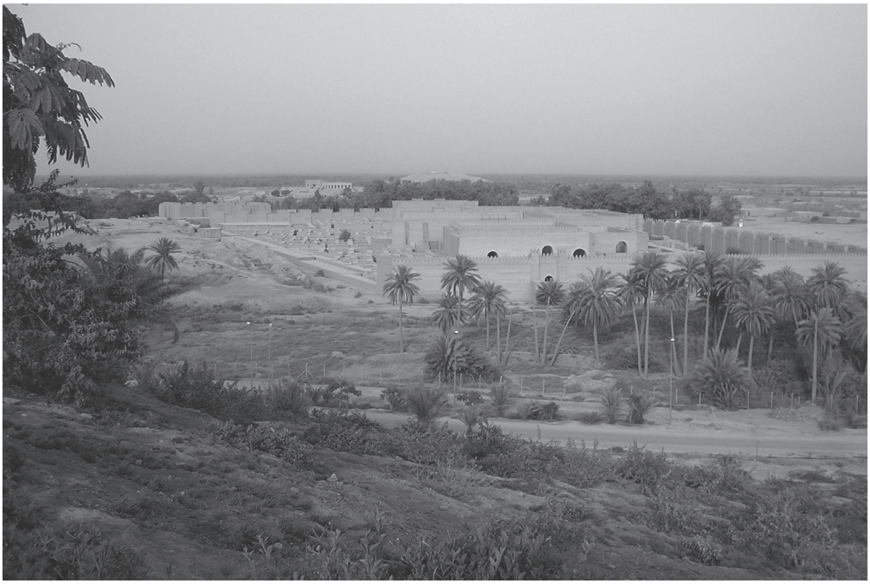

Fig. 3.13. The walls of Babylon. Babylon, Iraq. Photo courtesy of Mike Feeney, Wikimedia Commons.

research, these sites have been extensively studied.[534] Jericho is also well-known for having one of the oldest fortification systems in the world.[535] Many kings wrote about fortifications. Biridiya of Megiddo informed the pharaoh that he guarded his city for the pharaoh diligently. "I have obeyed the orders of the king, my lord and my Sun, and I am indeed guard[ing] Magidda, the city of the king, my lord, day and night. By day I guard (it) [f]rom the fields with chariots, and by n[ight] *on* the wall[s of] the king, my lord."[536] Azatiwada, a king of Karatepe and vassal of the Danunians, wrote that he built fortifications so the Danunians could be safe.[537]

An interesting example of moving fortifications comes from the account of the battle between Asa and Baasha in the Old Testament. Baasha, the king of Israel, fortified Ramah, which occupied a central location in the central Benjamin plateau and restricted Judean access to all the surrounding areas. Asa recruited the help of Ben-Hadad, causing Baasha to stop working on the fortification of Ramah. Asa then took all the stone from Ramah and fortified Geba and Mizpah, towns further north, which prevented the Israelites from accessing the central Benjamin plateau (1 Kgs 15:16–24). Omri fortified the hill of Samaria when he transformed it into his capital (1 Kgs 16:24). The most famous story of fortifying a city before an attack is Hezekiah's strengthening of Jerusalem before the attack of Sennacherib (2 Kgs 20:20); one of the more dramatic remains of his work is the Broad Wall in Jerusalem (fig. 3.14).[538]

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[534] For introductory surveys, see Burke, *Walled Up To Heaven*; Samuel Rocca, *The Fortifications of Ancient Israel and Judah 1200–586 BC*, Fortress 91 (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2010); for the fortifications of Ugarit, see Vidal, "Ugarit at War (2)," 705–7; Yves Calvet, "Les systèmes défensifs d'Ougarit au Bronze moyen et récent," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 177–84.

[535] Kathleen Kenyon, "Jericho: Tell Es-Sultan," *NEAEHL* 2:674–81.

[536] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 297 (EA 243).

[537] *COS* 2.31:149.

[538] For an entry point into a discussion of the archaeology of Sennacherib's attack on Lachish and Jerusalem, see David Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: The Archaeological Perspective with an Emphasis on Lachish and Jerusalem," in Kalimi, *Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem*, 75–104.

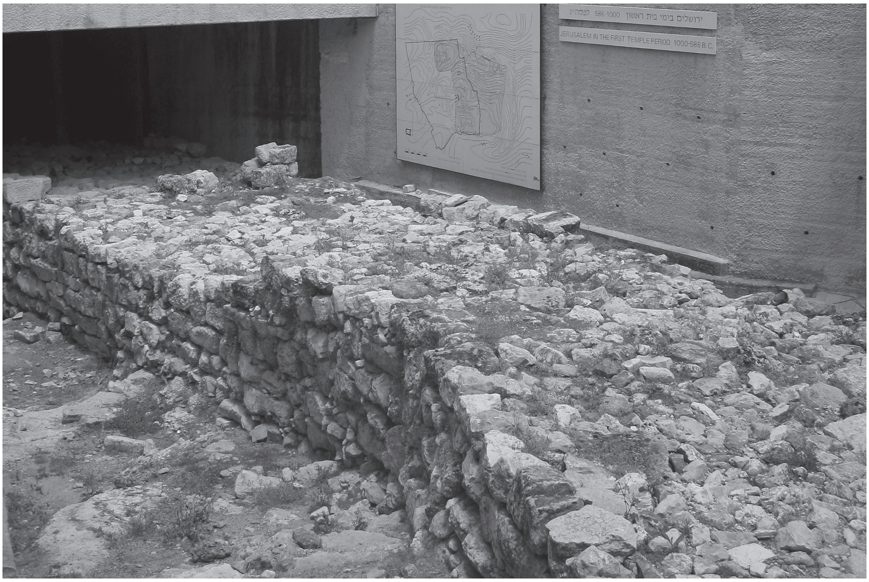
ירושלים בימי בית ראשון 586-1000 לפסה״נ
JERUSALEM IN THE FIRST TEMPLE PERIOD 1000-586 B.C.

Fig. 3.14. Broad Wall in Jerusalem, Israel. Photo courtesy of Oleg Moro, Wikimedia Commons.

4

Battles

Having examined the preparation for battle in the previous chapter, this chapter will look at the battles themselves, including open-field battles, communication during battle, the role of chariots and cavalry in battle, sieges, naval combat, single combat, the employment of deception in warfare, and the involvement of kings and princes in battle. A letter from Mari shows that the commanders thought about tactics before battle. "You constantly search for plans to beat the enemy and thwart him continually. But the enemy will likewise try to constantly search for plans and to thwart you continually."[1] Unfortunately, many details are lacking in these accounts, and it is often difficult to know what the commanders were planning. In spite of this frequent lack of detail, many texts provide us with at least a general idea of how each of these types of battles would have proceeded in the ancient Near East.

4.1. Open Field

> [Deploying] on clear, open ground without any concealment is the means by which to fight with strength and courage.
>
> —T'ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 27[2]

Some battles in the ancient Near East were fought in the open field, though this kind of battle appears to be rarer than sieges.[3] Open-field battles were particularly suited for armies that were based on chariot power, had significantly more strength than their enemy, and desired to avoid long sieges. However, we have little information about the tactics of open-field battles, as most descriptions from across the ancient Near East are very vague. It appears that open-field battles often happened near natural features that could provide some measure of defense, such as rivers or mountains. Offensive tactics could include a direct assault on the center to attempt to reach the enemy king, an encircling maneuver, or a focused attack on one wing of the enemy, but finding specific examples of these tactics is difficult.[4] These open-field battles probably did not last extended periods of time as soldiers would not have been able to fight for long periods of time (perhaps no more than fifteen minutes) without needing a rest.[5]

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[1] Jordi Vidal, "The Use of Military Standards by Old Babylonian Armies," *Akkadica* 130 (2009): 49 (ARM 1.5 = LAPO 17.517 = Sasson 3.4.b.i).

[2] See section 60 of the *Six Secret Teachings* for tactical instructions for open-field battles.

[3] Burke, *Walled Up To Heaven*, 27–29.

4.1.1. Egyptian

Early Egyptian records provide few hints about open-field battles. The left side of the Old Kingdom relief from the tomb of Anta shows an open-field battle that presumably began with archery fire since the Canaanites have arrows in their bodies.[6] Egyptian reliefs provide hints about the formations that the Egyptians might have employed in their open-field battles as well as depictions of hand-to-hand combat.[7] In spite of this paucity of information, we can glean at least some insight from two famous Egyptian battles of the New Kingdom. Although previous pharaohs had campaigned in Canaan and Syria, Thutmose III was the first to seek to control the area permanently. In his first campaign he marched north along the coast of Canaan (the conquest of Joppa, mentioned later in this chapter, is situated during this campaign) until he reached Mount Carmel, the great speed bump of the highway. He sought guidance from his generals about the best way to cross the mountain range but rejected their cautious counsel and rushed straight ahead through the Megiddo pass, encountering the Canaanite army in the plain. The account does not contain many details about the tactics of the battle except that Thutmose III claims he fought at the head of his army.[8]

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[4] For speculation about different phases of an open-field battle, see De Backer, *Neo-Assyrian Shield*, 116–19.

[5] Goldsworthy, *Roman Army at War*, 224; Sarah C. Melville, “Win, Lose, or Draw? Claiming Victory in Battle,” in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 528–29.

[6] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:146; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 358–59; Heagren, “Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt,” 58–59.

[7] For a detailed study of these formations and all the examples of hand-to-hand combat, see Heagren, “Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt,” 15–69.

The other well-known open-field Egyptian battle was that at Qadesh between Ramesses II and Muwatallis II of the Hittites in 1274. With the fall of Mitanni, Ramesses sought to control more land in Syria. He campaigned north through Canaan to Syria and thought that he would have an uneventful march due to intelligence that the Hittite king would not challenge him. However, when he arrived at Qadesh and camped to the north of the city he learned that his information was incorrect, and new intelligence indicated that the Hittite king was nearby. Before he could prepare for the battle and join the bulk of his army (who were south of Qadesh), Muwatallis II attacked from the east (crossing the Orantes River) and caused part of the Egyptian army to fold. According to Ramesses, it was only his personal valor (helped by late-arriving reinforcements) that prevented defeat (on the identity of the victor of the battle, see the discussion on conflicted memory in §5.9).[9]

> Whilst His Majesty was sitting, talking with the nobles, the vile enemy of Hatti came with his army and his chariotry, as well as numerous foreign countries who were with him, and they crossed the ford on the south of Qadesh. Then they penetrated the army of His Majesty, as they were marching, and (yet) were unaware. Then the army and the chariotry of His Majesty became weak before them (= the Hittites), whilst they were travelling towards the place where His Majesty was. Then the forces of the enemy of Hatti surrounded the followers of His Majesty who were at his side. Then His Majesty caught sight of them and he arose quickly and he raged against them like his father Montu, and he assumed the adornments of war and he fastened himself into his corslet, (for) he was like Sutekh in the moment of his power.
>
> Then he mounted "Victory in Thebes", his great chariot, and he led quickly all by himself. His Majesty was powerful, his heart was stout and no one was able to stand before him.…
>
> His Majesty penetrated the forces of the enemy at Hatti, together with all the foreign countries who were there with them. His Majesty was like Sutekh, Great of strength, and like Sakhmet in the moment of her rage.

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[8] *ARE* 2:184; *ANET*, 235–37; *AEL* 2:30–32; *COS* 2.2A:9–11.

[9] For maps of the battle, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 210; John Baines and Jaromir Malek, *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Checkmarks, 2000), 202.

> His Majesty killed the forces of the vile enemy of Hatti entirely, together with his great chiefs and all of his brothers, as well as the chiefs of every foreign country who had come with him; their army and their chariotry falling upon their faces, one on top of another. His Majesty slew them in their places, and they fell headlong in front of his horses—and His Majesty was alone, no other person was with him.
>
> Then His Majesty caused the forces of the enemy of Hatti to fall down on their faces, one on top of another, like the crocodiles going down into the waters of the Orontes. I was after them like a griffin, when I attacked every foreign country all by myself—my army and my chariotry having abandoned me, not one of them stood or turned back.[10]

Other than these famous battles, the Egyptians fought other less-documented open-field battles. A record of a battle by Thutmose III in his thirty-fifth year against the town of Arʾanu includes the use of a war cry in a battle: "the army of His Majesty performed the charging manoeuvre with the cry 'It's-up-for-grabs!'"[11] Combat against nomads, such as the Shasu Bedouins, would have been in the open field. While these battles are depicted in reliefs, tactical detail is difficult to discern.[12] The battles against the Libyans by Ramesses III also appear to be open-field battles according to the reliefs.[13] Merenptah defeated the Libyans in an open-field battle and claimed that he "wrought 6 hours of destruction amongst them."[14] Later in Egyptian history, a messenger reported to Psamtik II that the land of the Nubians lacked a battlefield or horses, indicating that an open battle was difficult to engage in.[15]

4.1.2. Hittite

Although the Hittites surely fought many open-field battles, data about them is scarce. A Hittite inscription from Tudhaliya I/II (ca. 1400) in which he put down a rebellion supported by foreign Hurrian troops describes the battle as an open-field battle. “The infantry and chariotry of Muwa and the infantry and chariotry of the Hurrians took the field against Kantuzzili.… Kantuzzili and I, the king, defeated the army of Muwa and the Hurrians. The enemy died *en masse*.”[16] A hint of Hittite open-field strategy might be found in the title “Overseer of the 1000 Chariot Warriors of the Left/Right,” which most likely indicates that the chariots were put on the left and right flanks.[17] One of the main Hittite enemies was the Kaska, who lived to the north of the Hittites. They frequently frustrated the Hittites because of their decentralized structure and their raids in which they attacked Hittite settlements, took plunder, and disappeared again. One text about a battle between the Hittites (perhaps under Suppiluliuma) and the Kaska tells how they chose to fight at a place surrounded on three sides by mountains and near a river; they destroyed the bridge to force the Hittites to cross the river to fight them.[18] This letter from the Hittite king to the general Kassu illustrates the problems they caused.

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[10] Davies, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty*, 93–95; for other translations, see *AEL* 2:61–62; *COS* 2.5B:40; *RITA* 2.3B:17–18.

[11] Redford, *Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, 83.

[12] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pls. 3, 5.

[13] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:121–22; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pls. 18–19; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 303.

[14] "Great Libyan War Inscription, Karnak," *RITA* 4.2.Merenptah:5.

[15] *AEL* 3.85.

> Concerning the matters about which you wrote to me: how the enemy is damaging the crops, how in Kappušiya he has attacked (the property) of the House of the Queen, how they have taken$^?$ one team of oxen belonging to the House of the Queen, and how they have led away captive 30 oxen and 10 men of the serfs (lit. poor people)—(all this) I have heard.
>
> Because the enemy thus marches into the land at a moment’s notice, you should locate him somewhere, you should attack him. But you must be very much on highest alert against the enemy.[19]

4.1.3. Early Mesopotamian

Although Herodotus claimed that Cyaxares, the king of Media from 624–585, was the first to arrange his troops in order on the battlefield in the ancient Near East (*Hist.* 1.103) and some modern scholars have argued that early infantry did not fight in ordered formations until the Iron Age and the rise of the large empires, this is unlikely to be true. [20] Reliefs such as the Standard of Ur (fig. 4.1) and the Stela of the Vultures (fig. 4.2) portray infantry fighting in ordered formations very early in Mesopotamian history.[21] Depending on how realistic these early reliefs are, they might provide information about tactical strategy in open-field battles.[22] According to the textual sources, most battles in third-millennium Mesopotamia were sieges, but a few open-field battles are recorded.[23] Naram-Sin fought an enemy "in the field of the god Sîn" and another enemy beside the gate of a city.[24] Later, he recorded that the king of Uruk gathered his allies and "in between the cities of URUxUD and Ašnak he drew up battle lines and awaited battle."[25]

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[16] Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, 122 (*CTH* 211.6).

[17] Lorenz and Schrakamp, “Hittite Military and Warfare,” 144.

[18] Discussion in Stavi, *Reign of Tudhaliya II and Šuppiluliuma*, 138 (*CTH* 83.2.A).

[19] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 109 (*HKM* 8; *CTH* 186).

[20] Doyne Dawson, *The First Armies*, Cassell History of Warfare (London: Cassell, 2001), 85–89.

The Mari letters sometimes refer to putting troops into battle formation (ARM 26.365; ARM 26.405). A letter from Ishme-Dagan to his brother Yasmah-Adad asked about which part of the army won a battle against a group of tribesman. "In the victory over the Lullu-tribesmen, was there push back on the center ('navel') of the army? Did the wings, right and left, win the victory? Was it won against the center? What? Please send me a complete report whether it was this way or that."[26]

4.1.4. Assyrian

Most Assyrian texts describing open field are laconic, simply stating that the battle happened in a plain. For example, Sennacherib recorded that his magnates fought Merodach-baladan in the plain of Kish (though they were unable to defeat him and required the help of the king).[27] An open-field battle with Urartu recorded on the Balawat Gates shows the armed Urartians walking over the mountains toward the Assyrians for battle, but

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[21] Standard of Ur: *ANEP*, 97, no. 303 (BM 121201). Stela of Vultures: *ANEP*, 95, no. 300 (Louvre AO 16109); Garrett G. Fagan, "'I Fell upon Him like a Furious Arrow': Toward a Reconstruction of the Assyrian Tactical System," in *New Perspectives on Ancient Warfare*, ed. Garrett G. Fagan and Matthew Trundle, HW 59 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 97–98.

[22] For an article based on this assumption, see Fabrice De Backer, "Cooking for the Vultures," *Historiae* 10 (2013): 51–84.

[23] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 207.

[24] RIME 2:105–6, E2.1.4.6, ii.9′–13′, iii.13′–35′.

[25] RIME 2:108, E2.1.4.6, v.22′–28′.

[26] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 203 (ARM 4.85+ = LAPO 17.621 = Sasson 3.4.a.iii); for other examples of open-field battles in the Mari letters, see Vidal, "Use of Military Standards," 46–47.

[27] RINAP 3.1:33, 1, 21–22.

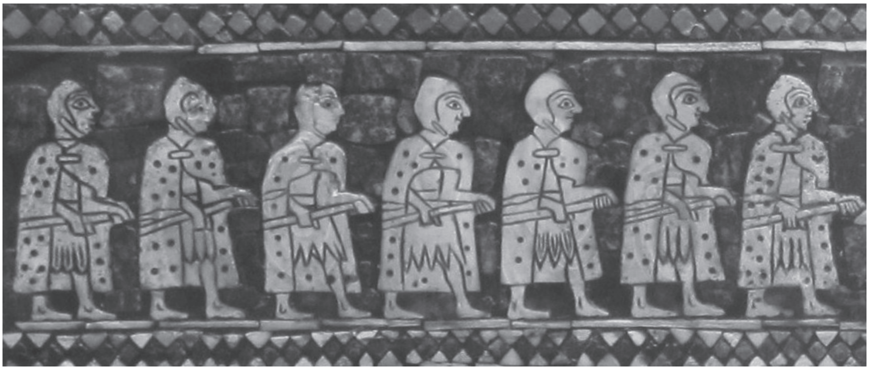

Fig. 4.1. Soldiers from Standard of Ur. British Museum 121201. Photo courtesy of LeastCommonAncestor, Wikimedia Commons.

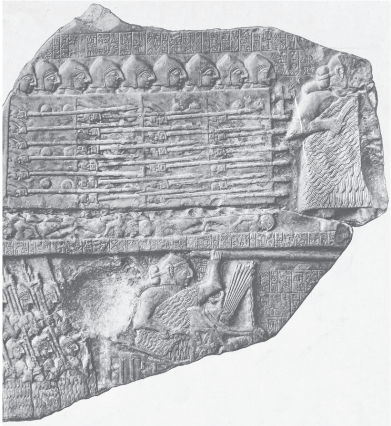

Fig. 4.2. Soldiers from Stela of the Vultures. Louvre AO 16109, 50, 2346, 2348. Photo from Ernest de Sarzec, *Découvertes en Chaldée*, pl. 3bis.

in the battle itself the Assyrians are slaughtering the enemy (who are now mostly unarmed) (fig. 4.3). In general, battles against certain people groups tended to be open-field battles, such as the Arabs who lived in tents.[28]

Other open-field accounts hint that natural landmarks played an important role. As part of an attempt to expand the Assyrian empire westward, in 853 Shalmaneser III defeated a western coalition of kings on a plain near Qarqar (in modern-day Syria). Though the details of the battle are lacking, the reference to the river implies that it played a role in the battle. "The plain was too small to lay the (incredible number of) their bodies (lit., "lives") flat; the extensive area was not sufficient (lit., "vanished") to accommodate burying (all of) them. I dammed up the Orontes River with their bodies like a bridge."[29] In an earlier example of this

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[28] See Assurbanipal's wars against the Arabs in BM 124925, 124926, 124927.

[29] RIMA 3:24, A.0.102.2, ii.100–101.

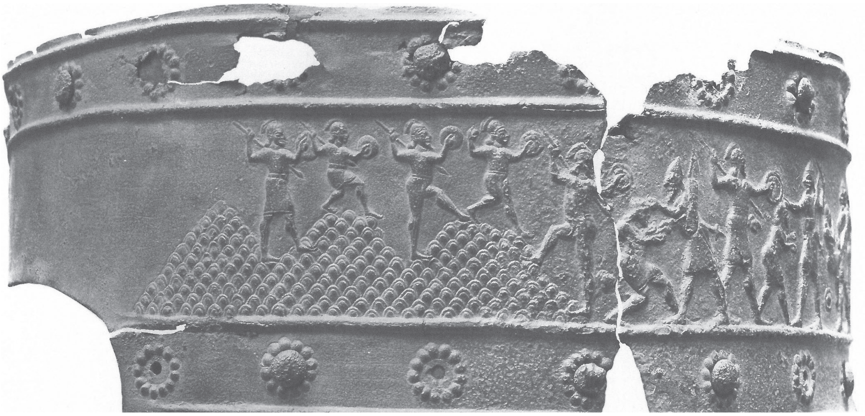

Fig. 4.3. Assyrian open-field battle against Urartu. Band 7 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 37.

use of a river for a defensive measure, Shamshi-Adad V fought a group of enemies in Babylon in the plain.

> Marduk-balāṭsu-iqbi, trusting in the mass of his army, mustered the lands Chaldaea, Elam, Namri, and Aram, with his multitudinous troops (and) moved forward to wage battle and strife against me. He drew up the battle line of his troops by the River Daban in front of the city Dūr-Papsukkal. I fought with him (and) defeated him. I slaughtered 5,000 of his hordes (and) captured 2,000 alive. I took away from him 100 chariots, 200 cavalry, the pavilion, his royal tent, (and) his camp bed.[30]

A few Assyrian texts provide hints about Assyrian tactics in open-field battles through their metaphorical imagery, though it is difficult to know how much to read between the lines of such texts.[31] One of the most well-known of these texts is Sargon II's Letter to Assur concerning his eighth campaign (against Urartu).[32] When his Mannaean vassal Ullusunu asked him to defeat Rusa of Urartu, the Assyrian obliged him. Rusa sent him a messenger inviting him to battle, and Sargon was so upset by this he prayed and hastened to the battle, perhaps to give him a tactical advantage by not setting up camp first.[33] The preparations he disregarded for this battle, including sending advance troops, bringing up the wings, and protecting the rear, might be the clearest clue to normal Assyrian tactics. The metaphor of attacking the enemy like a "furious arrow" might also indicate a focus on the center of the enemy's line.[34] Since this was a mountainous region, Rusa presumably intended to use the terrain to his advantage.

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[30] RIMA 3:188, A.0.103.1, iv.37–45; for another example of an open-field battle near a river, see Shalmaneser III's battle in Namri in RIMA 3:4, A.0.102.2, iv.7–13.

[31] For discussion of these tactics in an Assyrian context, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:302–4; JoAnn Scurlock, "Neo-Assyrian Battle Tactics," in *Crossing Boundaries and Linking Horizons: Studies in Honor of Michael C. Astour on His Eightieth Birthday*, ed. Gordon D. Young, Mark W. Chavalas, and Richard E. Averbeck (Bethesda, MD: CDL, 1997), 491–517; Fabrice De Backer, "Some Basic Tactics of Neo-Assyrian Warfare," *UF* 39 (2009): 69–115; Davide Nadali, "Assyrian Open Field Battles: An Attempt at Reconstruction and Analysis," in Vidal, *Studies on War in*

> To the tired troops of Assur, who, having come such a long way, were exhausted and weary, who had crossed over, one after another, countless distant mountains, extremely arduous to ascend and descend, so that their faces had fallen, I gave no respite to their fatigue, I gave them no water to slake their thirst, I made no bivouac nor did I set up a redoubt. I did not send forward my (advance) warriors nor assemble my forces, I did not bring up my right and left wings, I had no care for my rear. I had no fear of his entire army, I disdained his cavalry, nor did I glance at the vast numbers of his armored warriors! With only my single chariot and the horsemen who ride with me, who never leave me in hostile or friendly territory, the elite squadron of Sin-ah-usur, I fell upon him like a furious arrow, I defeated him and forced him into retreat. I made a huge carnage of him, spreading out the corpses of his warriors like malt and choking the mountain slope with them.[35]

The battle of Sargon II against the Babylonians and the Elamites in his thirteenth year (710) might also provide some tactical detail. Sargon II marched south to put down a Babylonian rebellion by Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II), but the Babylonians enlisted the Elamites to help them, and they made a stand together at Dur-Yakin, where the defenders

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the Ancient Near East, 117–52; Fagan, "I Fell upon Him like a Furious Arrow"; Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 192–205.

[32] For more discussion of the tactics of this battle, see Scurlock, "Neo-Assyrian Battle Tactics," 498–503; H. W. F. Saggs, "Assyrian Warfare in the Sargonid Period," *Iraq* 25 (1963): 151–54.

[33] For another Assyrian king who hastened to battle (though in this case he sent his generals ahead of him and they were defeated), see RINAP 3.1:33, 1, 19–24.

[34] For another reference to the arrow metaphor, see RINAP 3.2:315, 223, 36.

[35] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 798; also *COS* 4.42:204.

fortified themselves in a plain in front of the city. The references to an eagle and a net might indicate an encircling movement.[36]

> Before me, Marduk-apla-iddinna gathered together his inhabited towns and the gods dwelling in them and brought them in to the city of Dûr-Iakin and strengthened its defence. He set off ten "poles" (distance) in front of its main wall and made two hundred cubits the width of the moat went down one-and-a-half "poles" (until) he reached water-level. He cut a breach from the Euphrates and let it flood its (the city's) cultivation; its meadow lands, the place of battle, he soddened with water, and made difficult the crossing. He himself together with his accomplices his men of battle, between the streams, like a duck, he pitched his royal tent and drew together his encampment. At the command of the gods Aššur, Nabu, and Marduk across his streams I made (my soldiers) lay down a bank (of earth).[37] He himself, together with his warriors, like a flying eagle I caught him in a net, the corpses of his *nuballi* and of the Aḫlamu, desert-folk who went at his side, (with these) like very "rats" I filled the precincts of his city.[38]

A letter from the scholar Bel-ushezib instructed Esarhaddon on gathering information in Mannaea (in the mountains to the east of Assyria) before an attack and on tactics to fight the enemy when they arrive. The advice emphasizes the role of the horse troops as scouts to determine the strength of the enemy before committing the whole army. His advice sounds very convincing until the end of the letter, when the scholar notes that he does not have any first-hand knowledge of the territory. It is unknown what happened in the battle; the only reference to the Mannaeans in the annals of Esarhaddon is a broad statement that he "scattered the Mannean people, undisciplined Gutians, and its army."[39]

> As to what the king has written to his troops, saying: "Enter the Mannean territory; however, not the whole army should enter. Let only the

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[36] As argued in Scurlock, "Neo-Assyrian Battle Tactics," 504–5.

[37] A parallel text says that Sargon II caused his warrior to "fly across his ditches like eagles"; see *ARAB* 2:19, §39; Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 333.

[38] C. J. Gadd, "Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II from Nimrud," *Iraq* 16 (1954): 186–87.

[39] RINAP 4:18, 1, iii.59; also *COS* 4.39:176; hostility with Mannea is indicated by a letter to Esarhaddon concerning a Mannean deserter with information to share (SAA 16.148); for a brief discussion of this letter, see Fuchs, "Assyria at War," 384–85.

> cavalry and the professional troops make their entry. What the Cimmerians have said, 'The Manneans are all yours; we shall keep aloof,' may be a lie! They are barbarians who recognize no oath taken before god and no treaty. [The cha]riots and wagons should stand side by side [in] the pass, [...] let the cavalry and the professional troops enter and plunder the Mannean countryside; then let them come back and take up position [in] the pass. [Only] after they have repeatedly entered and plundered [the countryside], and the Cimmerians have not fallen [upon them], the [whole] army may enter [and assault] the Mannean cities." Bel [has ordered] the destruction of Mannea and is now [delivering] them once more into the hands of the king, my lord. If the moon [is seen] together with the sun on the fifteenth day of this month, it is on account of them, meaning that the [Cimm]erians will indeed keep aloof from them [...] will be conquered.
>
> I have written to the king, my lord, without proper knowledge of the conditions in that country. The lord of kings should consult an expert of the country and then write to his army as he deems best. Your advantage is, in any case, that there are more deserters than fighting soldiers among the enemy. When the whole army is entering, let patrols go and capture their men in the open country and then question them. If the Cimmerians indeed stay away from them, let the whole army invade and assault the cities.[40]

A final Assyrian text from Assurbanipal illustrates another possible open-field tactic. Assurbanipal journeyed south in the middle of his reign to put down a rebellion by the Elamite king Teumman, who was supporting Assurbanipal's brother's rule in Babylon (Shamash-shum-ukin). It appears that in this battle the Elamite king put his allies behind him rather than to his flanks.[41] This battle was also recorded in a series of reliefs by the king.[42]

> Teumman became afraid and turned back. He entered Susa. To save his life he divided silver and gold among the people of his land. His allies, who (usually) occupied his flanks (lit., going at his side), he sent to the

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[40] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 156 (SAA 10.111 = *ABL* 1237 = *SLA* 329).

[41] Scurlock, "Neo-Assyrian Battle Tactics," 506–9; for more on this battle, see J. Córdoba, "Die Schlacht um Alaya-Fluß: Ein Beispiel assyrischer Kriegführung während der letzten Jahre des Reiches," in *Assyrien im Wandel der Zeiten*, ed. Hartmut Waetzoldt and Harald Hauptmann, RAI 39, HSAO 6 (Heidelberg: Heidelberg Orientverlag, 1997), 7–18.

[42] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 288–99, nos. 381–83 (Or.Dr.II.2–3 = BM 124801).

> rear (lit., turned back from before him) and prepared for a battle with me. Opposite my front he made the Ulayya his stronghold, seized my watering-places. At the command of Ashur (and) Marduk, the great gods, who strengthened me through the favorable omens of a revelation, the work of an oracle-priest, I accomplished his defeat at Tell-Tuba. I blocked the Ulayya with their corpses. Their dead bodies like weeds (lit., thorns and thistles) filled the plain of Susa.[43]

4.1.5. Later Empires

Ninurta-kudurri-usur, a governor of the land of Suhu, defeated an Aramean tribe in the open field near a well.[44] A part of one of his other inscriptions could refer to battle tactics: "I broke up their *numerous* auxiliary troops and split up their military contingents. I captured those who tried to get away; I made their blood run like the water of a river."[45]

Herodotus told the story of Cyrus's attack on a nomadic group to the northeast after his defeat of Babylon, the Massagetai (*Hist.* 1.214). According to the Greek historian, Cyrus lost his life in the fierce battle. This report includes a volley of missile weapons followed by hand-to-hand combat.

> This fight I judge to have been the stubbornest of all fights that were ever fought by men that were not Greek; and indeed I have learnt that this was so. For first (it is said) they shot at each other from a distance with arrows; presently, their arrows being all shot away, they rushed upon each other and fought at grips with their spears and their daggers; and for a long time they battled foot to foot and neither would give ground; but at last the Massagetae had the mastery. There perished the greater part of the Persian army, and there fell Cyrus himself, having reigned thirty years in all save one. (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.214 [Godley, LCL])

Herodotus also offers some details about the open-field battle at Marathon. The Persians were victorious in the middle of the field, but the Greeks were successful on the flanks and trapped the advancing Persians in the center (*Hist.* 6.113). Iconography also sometimes depicted battles in open field situation (approaching duels), especially when space was limited (as on seals).[46]

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[43] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 68–69; also *ARAB* 2.333, §§862–63; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 225.

[44] RIMB 2:293, S.0.1002.1, 29–43.

[45] RIMB 2:296, S.0.1002.2, ii.11–14.

4.1.6. West Semitic

When Ben-Hadad was defeated in a siege of Samaria, he decided to try again the following year in an open-field battle, thinking that the gods of Samaria were gods of the hills. After waiting opposite each other for seven days, however, he was also defeated in the open-field battle (1 Kgs 20:26–30). Many raids are also recorded in the Old Testament, such as the marauding bands of Moabites who raided Israel every spring (2 Kgs 13:20–21).

4.2. Communication in Battle

> In general it is a rule of battle that during daylight hours the flags, pennants, and standards provide the measure, while at night the gongs, drums, pipes, and whistles provide the constraints.
>
> —Wu-Tzu 5

Before the age of modern communications, it would have been difficult for leaders in the ancient Near East to instruct their troops in the midst of a battle or for smaller groups of soldiers to even locate the rest of their army. Sight and sound could help keep armies together, such as through the use of standards (usually related to the gods) or music.[47] The most important method of communication would have been messengers, but these are rarely mentioned. Based on the paucity of information, this section can do no more than highlight the presence of such items as standards and musical instruments that might have been used for the purpose of communication in battle.[48]

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[46] For examples of seals depicting limited numbers of combatants fighting each other (including BM 124015), see Xin, “Enemies of Empire.”

[47] Vidal, “Use of Military Standards.”

[48] For an overview of the role of musical instruments in the more amply attested Roman wars, see Goldsworthy, *Roman Army at War*, 149–50.

4.2.1. Egyptian

The Egyptians often employed military standards in battle.[49] Since the various divisions were named after the gods, they would most likely have carried divine standards corresponding to the deity; Seti I refers to the First Division of Amun, the First Division of Re, and the First Division of Sutekh.[50] Likewise, Ramesses II refers to his four armies (the division of Amun, the division of Pre, the division of Ptah, and the division of Seth) during the battle of Qadesh.[51] Schulman speculates that these armies consisted of troops from similar areas and were named after the important deities of those areas.[52] As will be seen in chapter 6, a standard-bearer was an officer in charge of a company. Trumpets and drums might also have been used to help direct the troops, though it is possible these were only used for marches outside the battlefield.[53] A trumpeter appears in the top left of a relief showing Ramesses III marching to battle against the Libyans.[54] A trumpeter also stands next to the soldiers who are beating the spies in the Abu Simbel version of the battle of Qadesh.[55]

4.2.2. Hittite

Little evidence remains to determine how the Hittites communicated in battle. Various reliefs depict Hittites playing musical instruments, so perhaps some of these were also played in combat.

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[49] For discussion and many pictures of these standards, see R. O. Faulkner, "Egyptian Military Standards," *JEA* 27 (1941): 12–18; Stillman and Tallis, *Armies of the Ancient Near East*, 108–10; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 91–92; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 84–85.

[50] *COS* 2.4B:26.

[51] *COS* 2.5A:34.

[52] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 74–75.

[53] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 85; for more on the use of trumpets in martial contexts, see H. Hickmann, *La trompette dans l'Egypte Ancienne*, ASAESup 1 (Cairo: Institut francais d'archeologie orientale, 1946), 44–49.

[54] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:134–35; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 311.

[55] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, pls. 169–70; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 6.

4.2.3. Early Mesopotamian

Divine standards were used throughout the time period. An inscription from the early Babylonian king Shu-ilishu (the king of Isin) was placed on "a great divine standard, a tree fit for a (rich) harvest, evoking wonder, coloured with gold, silver, and shining lapis lazuli." The inscription ends with a note that the "name of this divine standard is 'Its divine prince is light of heaven and earth.'"[56] Different groups of troops might have carried the standards of various gods, since some texts refer to Nergal on the right and Erra on the left.[57] A legend of Naram-Sin describes him surrounded by deities on the way to battle. "They will surround […] (and) the land of […]. Naram-Sin proceeds on his way. The God-of-the-land—they go with him. To the fore, Ilaba, the pathfinder, to the rear, Zababa, the sharp-horned, the emblems of Annunītum and Ši-labba, two by two, right and left, horn by horn."[58] The soldiers in the victory stela of Naram-Sin might be carrying standards (fig. 4.42).[59] The Mari texts record that the standard-bearers were greatly rewarded and that fifty standard bearers were part of a troop of a thousand.[60] Another Mari text ordered that the gods were to go in front of the troops.[61]

4.2.4. Assyrian

The Synchronistic Chronicle tells how the Middle Assyrian king Enlil-narari fought the king of Karduniash and seized his standards.[62] The presence of the gods was marked through a variety of physical methods in the Neo-Assyrian army.[63] In his eighth campaign, Sargon II wrote that the standards of the gods marched with him in battle: "I prepared the yoke of Nergal and Adad, whose standards march ahead of me, for the lands of Zikirtu and Andini."[64] Adad-dan wrote to Esarhaddon to inform him that the statues of the gods were ready for battle: "All the [gods of hea]ven are ready (for battle). [May they march] in the presence of the king, my lord, and [bring] the enemies of the king, my lord, [quick]ly to submission before the feet of the king m[y] lo[rd]!" (SAA 16.132). The reliefs often depict standards, such as a relief of Assurnasirpal in a chariot with a standard (BM 124553). Two detailed examples of divine standards are found in Sargon's reliefs (fig. 4.4).[65] While not directly involved in battle, a relief of Assurbanipal shows a group of musicians walking behind several horses in the middle of a relief otherwise concerned with a battle against the Babylonians.[66]

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[56] RIME 4:17–18, E4.1.2.2, i.15–22, iv.3′–5′; see also *COS* 2.93:247.

[57] Stephanie Dalley, "Ancient Mesopotamian Military Organization," *CANE* 1:415.

[58] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 179–81.

[59] Zainab Bahrani, *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia* (New York: Zone, 2008), 193.

[60] Vidal, "Use of Military Standards," 45; also Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 507–8 (A.486+ = LAPO 17.579 = Sasson 2.1.c.ii.2).

[61] Vidal, "Use of Military Standards," 45 (A.4363).

[62] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 178–79.

[63] On divine standards in the Assyrian army, see De Backer, *Neo-Assyrian Shield*, 96–97; Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 40–41.

4.2.5. Later Empires

Babylonian texts refer to divine standards, but their connection to warfare is unknown.[67]

4.2.6. West Semitic

A trumpeter stands on the walls of a Syrian city being besieged by Ramesses III.[68] Ugaritic textual sources do not refer to divine standards, but a seal might portray one (though it might also be the head of a defeated enemy impaled on a pole).[69] The book of Numbers refers to banners (דגל) that differentiated large groups of people (Num 1:52; 10:14). Psalm 60:6 [ET 4] says that a banner (נס) could serve as a place to flee during a battle. "You have set up a banner for those who fear you, to rally to it out of bowshot" (NRSV). A prophetic text refers to the use of a banner to call nations far away to battle (Isa 5:26). The ark of the cov-

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[64] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 792; also *COS* 4.42:199.

[65] Albenda, *Palace of Sargon King of Assyria*, pls. 113–15.

[66] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 68 (Louvre AO 19904).

[67] Paul-Alain Beaulieu, *The Pantheon of Uruk During the Neo-Babylonian Period*, CM 23 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 353–55.

[68] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:151; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 313.

[69] Jordi Vidal, "Ugarit at War (6). A Military Standard in Ugaritic Iconography RS 4.129 = AO 15771," *UF* 45 (2014): 297–304.

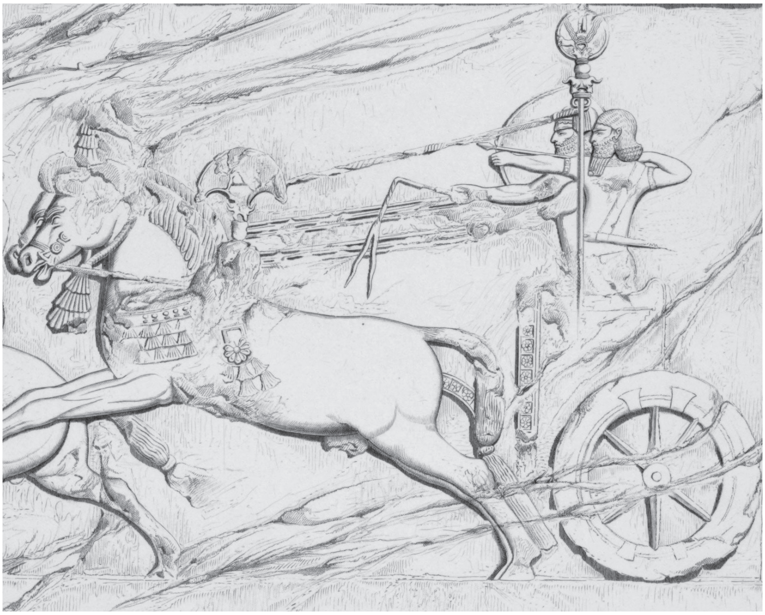

Fig. 4.4: Standards on an Assyrian chariot. Picture 9 of Salle II in Paul Emile Botta and Eugène Flandin, *Monument de Ninive*, pl. 145. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library.

enant was also said to have been brought into battle (Num 14:44; Josh 6; 1 Sam 4–6). The trumpet is associated with warfare (2 Sam 2:28), though the texts usually imply more of a ritual use than a tactical use (Num 10:9; Josh 6; Judg 7).

4.3. Chariots

> Chariots are the feathers and wings of the army, the means to penetrate solid formations, to press strong enemies, and to cut off their flight.
>
> —T’ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 55[70]

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[70] T’ai Kung goes on to say that in easy terrain one chariot is equivalent to eighty infantrymen and in difficult terrain they are equal to forty infantrymen. Tactically, he says that five chariots should form one line, with chariots ten paces apart and the lines forty paces part, while on a road the spacing should be six paces left to right and twenty paces front to back.

> In general desist from employing chariots when the weather is rainy and the land wet, but mobilize them when it is hot and dry.
>
> —Wu-Tzu 5

> The rule for selecting warriors for the chariots is to pick men under forty years of age, seven feet five inches [=five feet seven inches] or taller, whose running ability is such that they can pursue a galloping horse, race up to it, mount it, and ride it forward and back, left and right, up and down, all around. They should be able to quickly furl up the flags and pennants and have the strength to fully draw an eight-picul crossbow. They should practice shooting front and back, left and right, until thoroughly skilled.
>
> —T'ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 56

Chariots played a vital role in warfare in the ancient Near East.[71] Contrary to what one might expect, chariots came to be used extensively in combat long before riding on the back of a horse in combat.[72] Since chariots were employed in similar ways in different parts of the ancient Near East, this section will begin with a broad overview of chariot tactics before moving on to examine each culture in more detail.

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[71] The standard book on the subject of chariots in battle is M. A. Littauer and J. H. Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals in the Ancient Near East*, HdO 7 (Leiden: Brill, 1979). However, the literature continues to proliferate; see now P. R. S. Moorey, "The Emergence of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot in the Near-East C. 2000–1500 B.C," *WA* 18 (1986): 196–215; Rommelaere, *Chevaux du Nouvel Empire égyptien*; J. N. Postgate, "The Assyrian Army in Zamua," *Iraq* 62 (2000): 93–100; Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 8–23; Fields, *Bronze Age War Chariots*; Fabrice De Backer, "Evolution of War Chariot Tactics in the Ancient Near East," *UF* 41 (2010): 29–46; Deborah Cantrell, *The Horsemen of Israel: Horses and Chariotry in Monarchic Israel (Ninth–Eighth Centuried B.C.E.)*, HACL 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011); Barton C. Hacker, "Horse, Wheel, and Saddle: Recent Works on Two Ancient Military Revolutions," *IBMH* 32 (2012): 175–91; André J. Veldmeijer and Salima Ikram, eds., *Chasing Chariots: Proceedings of the First International Chariot Conference (Cairo 2012)* (Leiden: Sidestone, 2013).

[72] The broader terms *cart* and *wheeled vehicle* are used as overarching terms, while *chariot* refers specifically to the two-wheeled cart that was designed for rapid movement in battle; for more on these definitions, see Karlene Jones-Bley, "The Evolution of the Chariot," in *Horses and Humans: The Evolution of Human-Equine Relationships*, ed. Sandra L. Olsen et al., BARIS 1560 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2006), 181–92.

The exact role of chariots in battle is debated since the texts do not provide much direction.[73] For example, Tiglath-pileser I describes a battle line with chariots: "I drew up a battle line [*sidirtu*] of chariots against Marduk-nādin-aḫḫē, king of Karduniaš, (and) defeated him."[74] Two possibilities have been suggested for the role of chariots in battle based on the *Iliad*. First, the chariots could serve as taxis for the warriors, who would disembark the chariot when they arrived at the scene of battle.[75] However, the number of chariots made for the armies and the expense to construct them makes this unlikely.[76] Second, they could serve as a platform for hand-to-hand combat (resembling jousting on horseback); however, the spears used in the ancient Near East were not long enough for this kind of combat to be effective.[77]

The Standard of Ur (figs. 4.5 and 4.6) and many later images (figs. 4.7 and 4.8) depict wheeled vehicles or the horses trampling the enemy, leading some scholars to speculate that this commonly happened in ancient battle.[78] However, most scholars think that it was only a symbolic image as horses would have been reticent to step on the bodies due to the danger of hurting their legs, and jumping over the bodies could damage the necks

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[73] For a helpful survey of the various views, see Robin Archer, "Chariotry to Cavalry: Developments in the Early First Millennium," in Fagan, *New Perspectives on Ancient Warfare*, 58–66.

[74] RIMA 2:43, A.0.87.4, 50–51.

[75] Alan R. Schulman, "Chariots, Chariotry and the Hyksos," *JSSEA* 10 (1980): 105–53; for an example, see *Il.* 5.9–13.

[76] Thomas Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East: An Experimental Investigation of Materials, Construction, and Effectiveness, with a Consideration of Socio-Economic Implications" (PhD diss., University of Durham, 2002), 24–25; however, based on a heavy kind of scale armor, Hulit suggests that some chariot troops might have been elite troops that were driven to specific points of the battle to fight on foot as shock troops.

[77] The theory of chariot warfare as hand-to-hand combat could be associated with the Hittites, as the Egyptian representations of Hittite chariots do not usually portray them with bows (but see the discussion below). For an alternative view, see Mary A. Littauer and Joost H. Crouwel, "Chariots in Late Bronze Age Greece," in *Selected Writings on Chariots and Other Early Vehicles, Riding and Harness*, ed. Peter Raulwing, CHANE 6 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 53–61; originally published as M. A. Littauer and J. H. Crouwel, "Chariots in Late Bronze Age Greece," *Antiquity* 57 (1983): 187–92.

[78] Cantrell, *Horsemen of Israel*, 28–31. For another Assyrian example, see Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 116 (Or.Dr.III.SW7).

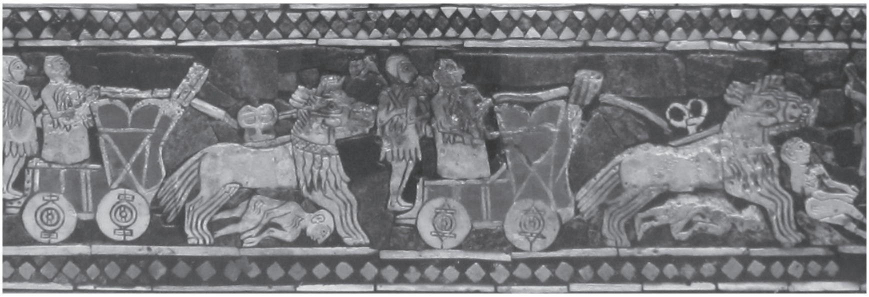

Fig. 4.5. Wheeled vehicles on the Standard of Ur. British Museum 121201. Photo courtesy of LeastCommonAncestor, Wikimedia Commons.

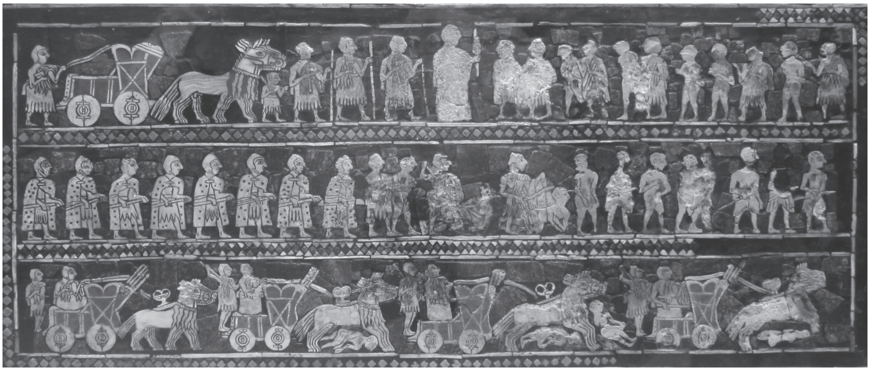

Fig. 4.6. War side of Standard of Ur. British Museum 121201. Photo courtesy of Babelstone, Wikimedia Commons.

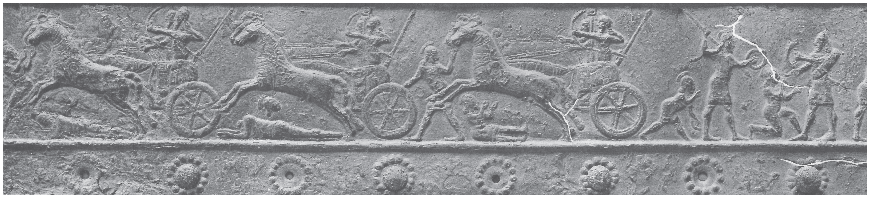

Fig. 4.7. Assyrian chariot trampling the enemy. Band 7 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 41.

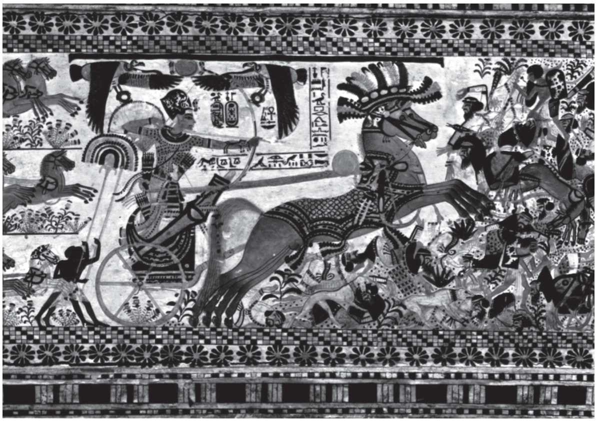

Fig. 4.8. Painting of King Tutankhamen in a chariot. Egyptian Museum, Cairo. Photo courtesy of The Yorck Project, Wikimedia Commons.

of the horses and the wheeled vehicles.[79] At the anecdotal level, Duncan Nobel describes an attempt he made to charge a horse into an unbroken line of people, but his horse refused to do so.[80] Further, since other images (such as the Stela of Vultures) include infantry walking over corpses, it was most likely simply an artistic motif.

Although the chariot is sometimes described as a tank (a modern Israeli tank is called the Merkava, the Hebrew word for chariot), this is a false comparison.[81] In contrast to a tank, the chariot does not provide effective protection (even when armor was added to later chariots) and is restricted to level ground.[82] Horses were also easy targets for enemy troops to hit, although Deborah Cantrell argues that since a horse would only die once it lost 30 percent of its blood, it would have been difficult to kill. She speculates that the best way to kill a horse would have been an axe blow to the head; focusing on the horse's legs would have brought down the horse without killing it.[83]

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[79] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 32–33; Archer, “Chariotry to Cavalry,” 60.

[80] Duncon Noble, “Assyrian Chariotry and Cavalry,” *SAAB* 4 (1990): 62.

[81] R. O. Faulkner, “Egyptian Military Organization,” *JEA* 39 (1953): 43; the comparison works better if the link is emphasized as being an elite weapon, as in Richard A. Gabriel and Karen S. Metz, *From Sumer to Rome: The Military Capabilities of Ancient Armies*, Contributions in Military Studies 108 (New York: Greenwood, 1991), 79.

[82] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 33, 92; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 75–76; Hulit, “Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East,” 17–18.

[83] Cantrell, *Horsemen of Israel*, 32–34.

In the battle itself, most scholars speculate that the chariots charged toward the enemy infantry with the chariot serving as a mobile weapon platform for the chariot-warrior to shoot the enemy. When they approached the enemy line, they would turn parallel to the line of the enemy and continue shooting.[84] The chariot would have provided a little extra height for the archers and allowed them to quickly get in range, shoot, and retreat before their enemies could respond. The chariot would also allow for more storage; for example, reliefs show quivers being attached to the side of Egyptian chariots.[85] A text in P.Koller lists the weapons and items needed for an expedition to Syria, including food (for the horses) and weapons (arrows, lances, swords, whips, chariot-clubs, staff, javelins, and bow), at least some of which might have been brought on a chariot.[86] A variation of this idea based on modern reconstructions of the chariots is that the chariots raced toward the enemy at different points simultaneously, firing at them until they drew close and then they made a sharp turn and turned back to their own lines.[87]

Another common task for chariots was to pursue the fleeing enemy with their main weapon, the bow.[88] Merenptah describes the role of chariots in his Karnak Inscription. "Indeed, the chariot-warriors who were upon the chariots of his majesty placed themselves in pursuit of them, they (i.e., the Libyans) being overthrown by arrows, carried off, and slaughtered."[89] Likewise, it appears that when the Egyptian army of the New Kingdom marched to war the chariots were on the fringes of the army, giving them greater freedom of movement.[90] Finally, chariots could be used in sieges to prevent anyone from escaping the city and to protect the besieging troops.[91] The account of the siege of Urshu illustrates this. "The king became angry and said: ‘Guard the roads—keep watch on those who would enter the city and those who would go out of the city! Let no (one) go over to the (other) enemies—to the city Zaruar, to the city Aleppo, to the Hurrian army, or to Zuppa!’ They replied: ‘We will be on guard. Eighty chariots (and) eight armies encircle the city.’”[92]

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[84] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 75–76; Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 92–93; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 81–83.

[85] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 15–18.

[86] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 431.

[87] Joost Crouwel, "Studying the Six Chariots from the Tomb of Tutankhamun—An Update," in Veldmeijer, *Chasing Chariots*, 88.

[88] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 62.

[89] Ibid., 118, no. 189; also "Great Libyan War Inscription, Karnak," *RITA* 4.Merenptah.2:6.

[90] Anthony J. Spalinger, "Egyptian Chariots: Departing for War," in Veldmeijer, *Chasing Chariots*, 253.

[91] Cantrell, *Horsemen of Israel*, 73–74; De Backer, "Evolution of War Chariot Tactics," 33.

The battle of Qadesh is one of the few references to chariots fighting directly against other chariots.[93] Since the Hittites are depicted with spears rather than bows, one possible reason for the Egyptian victory was the greater power of the bow.[94] Another option is that the three man Hittite chariot served mainly as a taxi for the warriors, who would depart the chariots to fight, placing them at a disadvantage to the Egyptian chariot archers.[95] However, as noted below the Hittites used chariot archers, so a technological difference is most likely not the cause of the Hittite defeat.[96]

Since Robert Drews argues that infantry played no role in chariot battles, he envisions most major battles as focusing on chariots. In his reconstruction of chariot battles, the chariot armies would race towards each other, shooting as soon as they were within range. The ranks would have been wide but shallow enough to give space for maneuvering. Instead of turning aside when approaching the enemy line, they would have continued straight ahead, charging through the thin enemy ranks. If enough troops remained, each side would turn around and charge again, this time from the opposite direction.[97] Drews argues that infantry played no role in Late Bronze Age chariot battles, taking the Qadesh chariot battle as paradigmatic: all battles of the time were between two great chariot armies.[98] Based on the very minimal attention paid to infantry in warfare texts of the time, he supposes that the infantry would have played a role only when the chariot was not effective, such as in the mountains and during sieges.[99] When the infantry did fight, it would not have been in organized formations and it would have been against barbarians, not civilized enemies.[100] He accounts for the end of the Bronze Age by arguing that the infantry (usually mercenaries) realized that they could defeat the chariot armies of the empires with new weapons.[101]

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[92] Beckman, “Siege of Uršu Text,” 26.

[93] See reliefs of the battle in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:16–25, 84, 96, 100–101, 169–70; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. 1–6; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 281–93.

[94] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 93; for more references, see Robert Drews, *The End of the Bronze Age: Changes in Warfare and the Catastrophe ca. 1200 BC* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 114.

[95] Crouwel, “Studying the Six Chariots from the Tomb of Tutankhamun,” 88.

[96] Hermann Genz, “The Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot and the Role of Archery in the Near East at the Transition from the Middle to the Late Bronze Ages: Is There a Connection?,” in Veldmeijer, *Chasing Chariots*, 102; Archer, “Chariotry to Cavalry,” 61–62.

[97] Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 127–29.

[98] Ibid., 129–34.

Most reviewers of Drews's work have pointed out the many logical jumps he must make for his theory to work, especially in regard to the role of infantry. As noted earlier, infantry marched in ordered lines as far back as the Standard of Ur (fig. 4.1).[102] The large size of infantry armies would lead one to suspect that they were there to fight, not simply to be present in case a siege ensued. The easy ability to replace infantry troops would also have been useful in using them as a strike force when compared to the expensive chariots. [103] Drews's views on the nature of chariot warfare have also not found favor: Drews's vision of chariot warfare would have been prohibitively expensive in terms of both trained men and precious chariots. Chariots on both sides would have been destroyed quickly and would not have been able to keep the appropriate spacing as chariots and horses were strewn across the battleground.[104]

4.3.1. Egyptian

In contrast to Mesopotamia, Egypt lacked a tradition of wheeled vehicles before the chariot came into use in the New Kingdom.[105] The Middle Kingdom military does not appear to have employed chariots, perhaps due to most battles being fought near the Nile where open space was lacking. The earliest references to chariots in Egypt are found in the texts of Ahmose at the beginning of the New Kingdom.[106] The nature of warfare changed in dramatic ways near the beginning of the New Kingdom with the rise of the chariot, the composite bow, and metal armor. Each of these was interconnected, as the chariot allowed more effective use of the bow and armor became stronger to protect against the more prominent use of the bows on chariots. Likewise, as armor became heavier, arrowheads also became stronger. Due to the expense of the chariots and armor, the bow became more closely associated with the upper class (royalty are often depicted using the bow in a chariot).[107] Control of the chariot also improved during the time of the New Kingdom by the use of metal bits, which allowed the driver to change direction and slow down more rapidly.[108]

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[99] Ibid., 135–41.

[100] Ibid., 139, 157.

[101] Ibid., 209–25.

[102] *ANEP*, 97, no. 303 (BM 121201).

[103] Archer, "Chariotry to Cavalry," 65–66.

[104] Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 82; Archer, "Chariotry to Cavalry," 64–66; Oliver Dickinson, "Robert Drews's Theories about the Nature of Warfare in the Late Bronze Age," in *Polemos: Le Contexte Guerrier en Egee a l'Age du Bronze*, ed. Robert Laffineur, Aegaeum 19 (Belgium: Kliemo, 1999), 23; Mary A. Littauer and Joost H. Crouwel, "Robert Drews and the Role of Chariotry in Bronze Age Greece," in Raulwing, *Selected Writings on Chariots*, 68–69; the last article was originally published as Littauer and Crouwel, "Robert Drews and the Role of Chariotry in Bronze Age Greece," *OJA* 15 (1996): 297–305.

[105] Ian Shaw, "Egyptians, Hyksos and Military Technology: Causes, Effects or

It is possible that the Egyptians and the Levant (as represented by the Hyksos) developed chariot use simultaneously.[109] However, it is more likely that the Egyptians acquired the chariot and the composite bow from the Hyksos, though the case is more complex than simple borrowing.[110] When the Egyptians lost control of Canaan, their main use for chariots also disappeared (chariots were not very effective in Egypt itself) and most likely the employment of chariots decreased thereafter.[111] Later in Egyptian history an enemy of Piye is even said to have ridden his horse because "he did not trust his chariot."[112]

The most famous examples of Egyptian chariots are those from the tomb of Tutankhamen (fig. 4.9), some of which can be seen today in the

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Catalysts?," in *The Social Context of Technological Change: Egypt and the Near East, 1650–1550 BC*, ed. Andrew J. Shortland (Oxford: Oxbow, 2001), 61–62.

[106] Ibid., 60–61; for the Ahmose text, see *COS* 2.1:5.

[107] Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot"; Moorey, "The Emergence of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot."

[108] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 91.

[109] Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 101–2.

[110] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 10–11; Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 76; Arianna Sacco, "Art and Imperial Ideology: Remarks on the Depiction of Royal Chariots on Wall Reliefs in New-Kingdom Egypt and the Neo-Assyrian Empire," in Veldmeijer, *Chasing Chariots*, 204; Shaw, "Egyptians, Hyksos and Military Technology."

[111] Archer, "Chariotry to Cavalry," 74–75.

[112] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 485.

Egyptian Museum in Cairo.[113] Reconstructions can also be seen in a variety of museums worldwide (fig. 4.10). Chariots were relatively light and could be carried on the shoulders of a soldier, though they became more substantial over the course of the New Kingdom.[114] The pharaohs also most likely used large chariots in battles to inspire fear in the enemies and encourage their own troops; one example is that found in the tomb of Thutmose IV.[115] Large numbers of chariots appear during the New Kingdom. Thutmose III plundered 894 chariots from Megiddo, while Amenhotep II brought back 730 chariots from one campaign and 1092 from another.[116]

Over the course of the New Kingdom the chariotry (*nt-ḥtry*) became a distinct arm of the Egyptian army and developed their own system of officers; Schulman has constructed a chart showing the relationship of the various ranks and titles related to the chariotry (though given the critique of Jean Yoyotte and Jesús López, caution should be used in placing too much certainty in these relative relationships as well as the differentiation between ranks and titles).[117] It is unclear whether the stablemasters (*ḥry jḥw*) were civilian or not, though they seem to rank higher than chariot-warriors (but not charioteers). Their function presumably was to maintain stables and the horses.[118] Bakaa, a stablemaster, was wealthy enough to make a stela for himself.[119] The standard-bearer of chariot-warriors would have led a company of chariot-warriors (though it would have been smaller in number than an infantry company) and provided military instruction.[120] It appears that the men in the chariotry were most likely

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[113] Crouwel, "Studying the Six Chariots from the Tomb of Tutankhamun"; Mary A. Littauer and Joost H. Crouwel, *Chariots and Related Equipment from the Tomb of Tutankhamun*, Tutankhamun's Tomb Series 8 (Oxford: Griffith Institute, 1985); Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 63–74.

[114] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 12–13; for more on the specific description of these chariots, see Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 76–81.

[115] Amy M. Calvert, "Vehicle of the Sun: The Royal Chariot in the New Kingdom," in Veldmeijer, *Chasing Chariots*, 46.

[116] Thutmose III: *COS* 2.2A:12; Amenhotep II: *COS* 2.3:21–22.

[117] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 86; Jean Yoyotte and Jesús López, "L'organisation de l'armée et les titulatures de soldats au nouvel empire égyptien," *BO* 26 (1969): 3–19.

[118] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 51–53, 61; Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 19–21.

[119] Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 198–200.

[120] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 61.

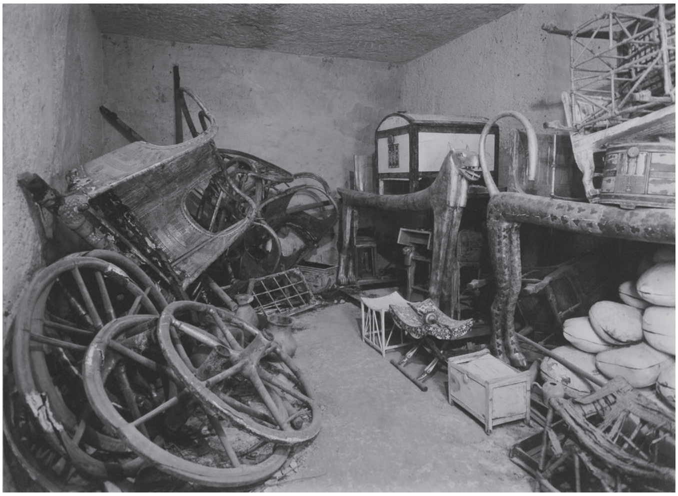

Fig. 4.9. Chariot from Tutankhamun's tomb. Photo from Harry Burton, *Tutankhamum Tomb Photographs*, 2:12.

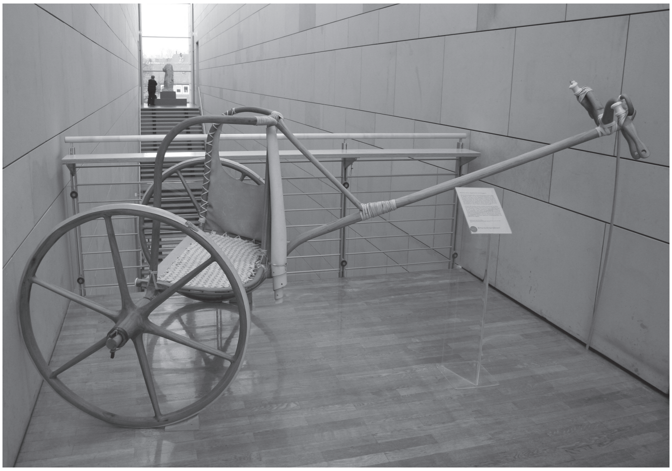

Fig. 4.10. Reconstruction of Egyptian chariot. Roemer- und Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim. Photo courtesy of Einsamer Schütze, Wikimedia Commons.

recruited from higher social classes.[121] According to P.Anast. 3, men were sometimes responsible for providing their own chariot and received appointments to the chariotry at least partly based on family connections. Chariots and their horses would have been quite expensive, as exemplified in Rib-Hadda's claim in EA 107 that he had charioteers, but no chariots or horses for the chariots because he had no money.

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[121] Ibid., 16, 60–61.

Those in the chariot corps were referred to by different terms, including charioteer (*kḏn*), chariot-warrior (*snnj*), and shield-bearer (*ḳr‘w*). However, the reliefs always depict two men in a chariot. It appears that the charioteer was a higher rank and was responsible for driving the chariot, while the second man (called either the shield-bearer or the chariot-warrior) was responsible for fighting. However, reliefs depict a variety of combinations, such as both men fighting or the chariot-warrior driving the chariot.[122] Schulman speculates that "shield-bearer" was not a rank but a title, but it is more likely that the terms *snnj* and *kr‘w* were synonyms.[123] A runner (*pḥrr*) fought on foot but was accounted as part of the chariotry. Since several reliefs depict infantry flanking chariots in battle, their function was most likely to protect the chariots from other infantry.[124]

Most likely the Egyptians used their chariots in battle as described earlier: mobile firing platforms that allowed the archers to attack and retreat quickly. The charioteer was probably responsible for driving the chariot and for shooting a bow when close to the enemy, while the other man held the shield and protected the charioteer.[125] Based on several occurrences in reliefs, it is possible that the charioteer could tie the reins around his waist to allow him to fight in battle and control the chariot

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[122] Ibid., 67–68.

[123] Title: ibid., 68; synonyms: Yoyotte and López, "Organisation de l'armée," 10–11. However, the terms appear to change over the course of time as well, as demonstrated in Spalinger, "Egyptian Chariots," 238–39; Oliver D. Langenbach, "Exkurs: Aufbau und Organisation der ägyptischen Streitwagentruppe," in Gundlach, *Militärgeschichte des pharaonischen Ägypten*, 351–52.

[124] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 38–39; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 89–96; Spalinger, "Egyptian Chariots," 252; for an example of infantry to the side of Ramesses III as he charged into battle in his chariot against the Libyans, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:141; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pl. 70; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 309. As noted above, the runners play an important role in Drews's reconstruction of chariot warfare, in which the runners operate as mobile infantry support for the chariots; see Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 141–47.

[125] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 18.

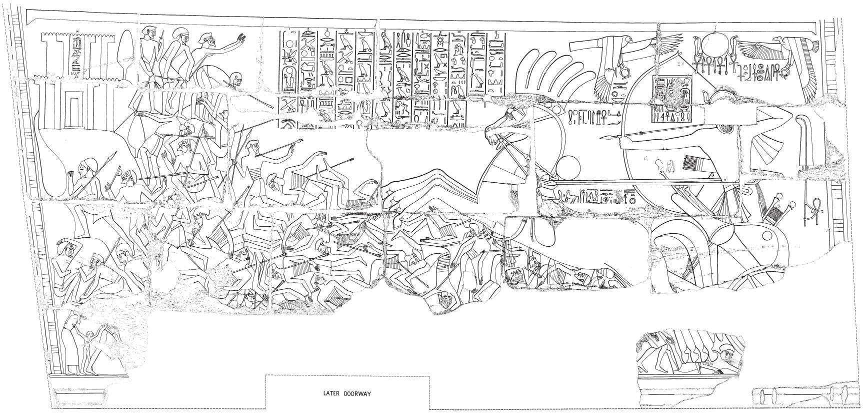

Fig. 4.11. Seti I driving his chariot. Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 3.

at the same time (fig. 4.11).[126] However, while such a feat is possible, it would have been too dangerous to attempt in any but the tamest of battles.[127] It is more likely that a pharaoh would have entered battle with a driver, but they portrayed themselves as alone in the chariot to emphasize their great martial power.[128] However, at least one relief depicts an enemy (an Amorite) performing the same feat.[129] Some Egyptian reliefs depict pharaohs in hand-to-hand combat while upon chariots, but this is most likely a stylized version of the battle.[130]

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[126] For examples of the practice, see Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pls. 2, 3, 5, 6; Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4: The Battle Reliefs of King Sety I*, pl. 3.

[127] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 18–19.

[128] Calvert, "Vehicle of the Sun: The Royal Chariot in the New Kingdom," 45–46; Crouwel, "Studying the Six Chariots from the Tomb of Tutankhamun," 86.

[129] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, 80, pl. 23; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:53; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 247; a very small version is included at the top in *ANEP*, 106, no. 322.

[130] For an example of such a relief (CG 46097 in the Cairo Egyptian Museum), in which Thutmose IV stands in a chariot holding an axe to smite the heads of several prisoners held by the hair in his other hand, see *ANEP*, 103, no. 315; Rommelaere, *Chevaux du Nouvel Empire égyptien*, 176–77; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:2; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 236. A relief from Ramesses II at Beit el-Wali depicts the pharaoh in a smiting pose while still on his chariot; see Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 13.

Scribal workbooks often praised the life of a scribe by showing the difficulties of other professions. This text in P.Anast. 3 (from the Nineteenth Dynasty) focuses on the difficult life of a chariot warrior.

> The scribe Amenemopĕ speaks to the scribe Pbēs. This letter is brought to you to the following effect: Pay attention, be a scribe, that you may be at the head of mankind. Come, let me describe to you a wretched profession, (that of) chariot-warrior. Because of his mother's father he is assigned to the stable, which has five slaves. He is allotted two men from amongst them, (but) they are unmindful of him. He goes to procure steeds at the military camp in the presence of His Majesty (l.p.h.). Fine horses are secured for him, and he is joyful and exults. He reaches his village with them. He sets about trotting them, and they feel fine trotting freely. He does not know their ways, and gives his property to his mother's father, that he may buy the chariot: its pole for 3 *deben*, the chariot (itself) for 5 *deben*. He goes on to trot upon it, and makes himself (?) into sandals of a sandal-maker. He seizes them and puts them in the *ʿby*; they throw him in the thicket: his legs are cut with the *ʿby*, his flank pierced with bites. People come to collect victuals; he begins to be tormented, he is flung upon the ground and beaten with 100 blows.[131]

In chariot armies, horses would have needed to be tended; a letter in P.Sallier 1 records some of this care. "The horse-teams of my lord are well; I have their (allotted) measure mixed before them daily, and their grooms bring to them the best grass from the papyrus-marshes. I assign grass to them daily, and give ointment to rub them down every month; and their chief of stable trots them every 10 days."[132] A letter (part of P.Anast. 1) was intended as a model for teaching; it was written by the scribe Hori during the reign of Ramesses II to "the royal command-writing scribe of the victorious army." The letter includes a description of a workshop for chariots.

> If only you could enter inside the armory with workshops surrounding you and carpenters and leather workers in your vicinity, they would do all that you desire. They would take care of your chariot so that it would cease to be inoperative. Your chariot pole would be retrimmed and its supports(?) installed. They would attach leather straps to your horse collar and … and furnish your yoke. They would mount your chariot case, which has burin engraving, [on] the frames. They would attach a

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[131] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 95–96 (P.Anast. 3 §7).

[132] Ibid., 307.

> pommel to your whip and fasten a lash [to] it. You would then go quickly forth to fight on the battlefield in order to perform heroic deeds.[133]

4.3.2. Hittite

Chariots were used throughout all periods of Hittite history.[134] Chariots appear in the Old Kingdom Hittite texts, such as in the armies of Hattusili I and Mursili I. Anitta also fought against chariots, and the siege of Urshu refers to chariots surrounding the city.[135] In the Deeds of Suppiluliuma, Mursili II recounts how the charioteers and teams of horses of his father were at the rear, perhaps for tactical reasons.

> In the morning my father drove down from Tiwanzana into the land, (while) in the rear his charioteers and six teams of horses were supporting him. And as my father was driving, he encountered(?) that whole enemy all at once, and my father engaged him in battle. Then the gods—the Sun Goddess of Arinna, the Storm God of Ḫatti, the Storm God of the Army, and [Ištar of the Battle-f]ield—marched before my father (so that) he defeated that enemy. [And] because [the …] was [v]ery (?) large, he cast away the civilian captives, cattle and sheep [which] they had taken.[136]

Egyptian reliefs of Hittite chariots do not usually portray them using bows, though a relief of Seti I is an exception (fig. 4.12).[137] Since Hittite texts refer to arrows as part of the chariot equipment, most likely they employed chariot archers.[138] The Hittite chariots in the battle of Qadesh

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[133] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 108–10; see also *COS* 3.2:9–14; *ANET*, 475–79; for a painting from the tomb of Menkheperresoneb that shows chariot builders, see Wolfgang Decker, *Sport and Games of Ancient Egypt*, trans. Allen Guttmann, Sport and History Series (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 52; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 1:69.

[134] For more on Hittite chariots, see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 142–90; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 138–41.

[135] Anitta: *COS* 1.72:184 (*CTH* 1.A); Urshu: Beckman, "Siege of Uršu Text," 26; Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 64–65.

[136] *COS* 1.74:187 (*CTH* 40).

[137] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 34.

[138] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 148–49; Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 121–22; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 139–40; Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 102.

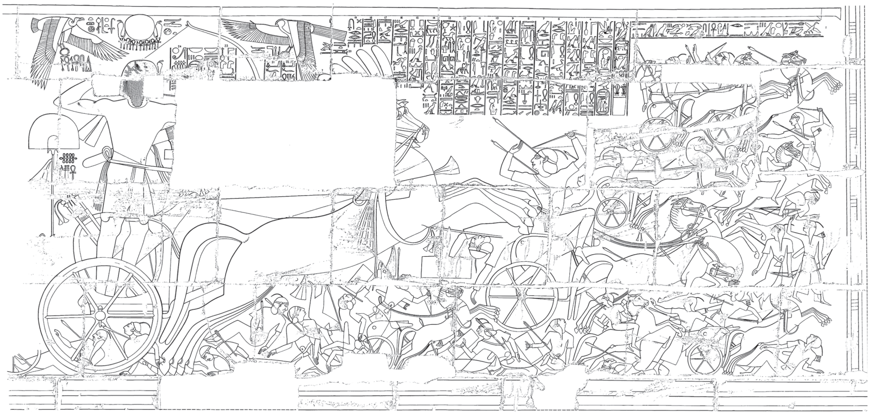

Fig. 4.12. Hittite chariots. Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 34. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

against Ramesses II mostly employ three men per chariot (though some only contain two men).[139] However, the earlier reliefs of Seti I depict Hittite chariots only employing two men per chariot.[140] One of the more famous Hittite texts relating to horses is the Kikkuli text, in which the author describes how to train chariot horses in a seven-month program involving strict food and water rations and physical training at varying times of the day.[141] A letter reported an incident of a man borrowing a chariot and then wrecking it; he was forced to repair the chariot for its owner.[142]

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[139] See the reliefs in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:21; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. 2, 3, 5; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 283, 288, 292–93; for an artist's reconstruction of these chariots, see Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 35, 39.

[140] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 34; Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 196; a small version can be found in the top register of *ANEP*, 106, no. 322; for a picture of a modern reconstruction of a Hittite chariot based on the Egyptian reliefs, see Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 27.

[141] For an overview of recent work on this text (*CTH* 284–286), see Peter Raulwing, "The Kikkuli Text: Hittite Training Instructions for Chariot Horses in the Second Half of the 2nd Millennium B.C. and Their Interdisciplinary Context," 2009, http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394d.

[142] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 212 (*HKM* 60; *CTH* 190).

4.3.3. Early Mesopotamia

The earliest references to the use of wheeled vehicles come from the third millennium. Reliefs such as the Standard of Ur (fig. 4.5) depict four-wheeled carts carrying warriors that are trampling the enemy, while other representations depict two-wheeled carts.[143] These carts would have been slow and difficult to maneuver but would have been terrifying to the enemy.[144] One modern experiment with a reconstructed Sumerian war cart demonstrated that "an expert javelin thrower can throw 30 javelins a minute a distance of up to 60 m. from a reconstruction of such a wagon moving at a speed of 10–12 miles an hour."[145] A letter from the Sargonic period illustrates the high value of a chariot.

> Tell my lord: Thus says Ilish-takal: I told him: "give me the two-wheeled chariot!" But he did not give it to me. While he was away, my man had seen that there was a two-wheeled chariot in Kibabar, in the house of Baziai. Then, after his messenger is dispatched, he should give (the chariot) to me. Come on, I am his stalwart servant, surely he can make me happy! Therefore put this inscribed tablet before him, so that he may hear how it is, and I will also make him happy.[146]

The early second millennium saw the development of a true chariot that could make rapid turns. Some of the depictions involve trampling a person, so they might have participated in combat (chariots were used in combat by the Hittites by this time). The first evidence of using a bow from a wheeled vehicle also comes from this time period.[147] Some scholars have suggested that the chariot came from Indo-European-speaking steppe tribes.[148] However, others have proposed that it makes more sense for the chariot to have evolved from earlier predecessors in Mesopotamia

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[143] *ANEP*, 97, no. 303.

[144] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 15–36–8; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 132–40.

[145] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 33.

[146] Michalowski, *Letters from Early Mesopotamia*, 32–33.

[147] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 48–72; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 145–53.

[148] For a fuller discussion, see Moorey, "Emergence of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot."

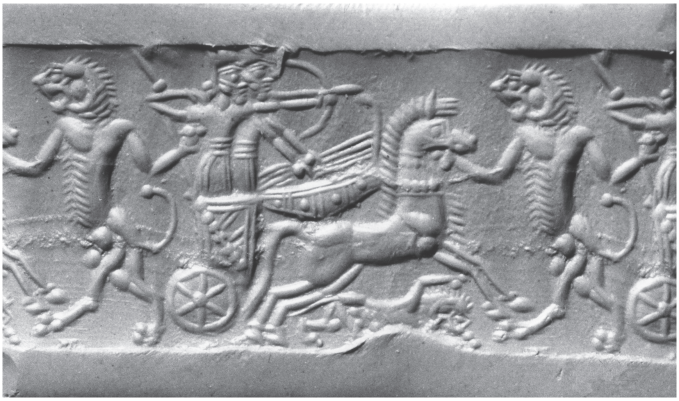

Fig. 4.13. Late second-millennium Assyrian chariot. Walters Art Museum 42.741. Photo courtesy of Walters Art Museum.

(such as the four- and two-wheeled carts).[149] Chariots are occasionally mentioned in the Mari letters, but their use in battle does not appear to be widespread.[150] Texts from Mari record that chariots were connected to archery; for example, in one text a chariot was issued with a quiver (ARM 21.295).[151] A cylindrical seal from Assyria from the second half of the second millennium shows two men riding in a chariot; one shoots a bow and one drives (fig. 4.13).

Chariots were important enough that documents were composed to record their sale. This simple document from Nuzi records the transfer of a chariot to a new owner and its transport to Assyria: "1 chariot was taken from Akip-apu son of Ḫašip-apu and was given to Aril-lumti son of. (*sic*) And Aril-lumti took it to the land of Assyria."[152] Another document from Nuzi records the numbers of various chariots.

> (1–5) … chariot(s) under the command of Waḫri-tae; 4 [+n?] ditto under the command of Šar-tešup; 4 [+n?] ditto under the command of Ḫaip-šarri. *They* are not coming back.
> (6–8) 5 ditto under the command of Šekar-tilla; 10 ditto under the command of Kel-tešup; 9 ditto under the command of Tarmip-tašenni.

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[149] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 68–71; for bibliographic evidence of this, see Hacker, "Horse, Wheel, and Saddle," 180.

[150] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 31–32.

[151] Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 21.

[152] Maidman, *Nuzi Texts and Their Use as Historical Evidence*, 20 (P-S 84).

(9) Total: 58 chariots of the left (wing).
(10–15) 6 [+n?] ditto under the command of Enna-muša; 4 [+n?] ditto under the command of Tarmiya; 6 [+n?] ditto under the command of Kai-tilla; 5 [+n?] ditto under the command of Niḫri-tešup; 4 [+n?] ditto under the command of Tupki-tilla; 7 [+2?] ditto under the command of Ḫutanni-apu.
(16) Total: 26 chariots of the right (wing).
(17–19) Urḫi-tilla, Tarmi-tilla, …, Alki-tešup; … who are not coming back.[153]

4.3.4. Assyrian

Although Doyne Dawson argues that the Assyrian army was mainly an infantry army, most scholars believe that the Assyrians frequently employed chariots based on the extensive references to chariots in texts and reliefs.[154] Shalmaneser III frequently boasted of depriving the enemy of his horses and chariots when he defeated them, as the horse troops had become symbolic of the military power of the enemy: "I destroyed their chariotry (and) cavalry—(and) took away their military equipment. To save their lives they ran away."[155] However, while the symbolic value of the chariot remained high, the practical use of the chariot declined over time.

The earlier Assyrian kings (before Tiglath-pileser III) employed light chariots in the traditional way, emphasizing their role as mobile firing platforms (fig. 4.14). However, based on the reliefs, chariots became heavier beginning with the reign of Tiglath-pileser III and reduced their maneuverability. For example, while reliefs frequently depict two riders in the chariots, some hold up to four (fig. 4.15).[156] One relief of four Elamite men in a chariot portrays one of the men holding the reins, one shooting a bow, and the two behind them holding spears.[157] The function of the heavy chariot in combat is unknown. Since the chariots rose further off the ground, it might have given the archers a better position to shoot from.[158] Others speculate that the heavier chariot allowed it to charge the enemy more easily.[159] On the other hand, the chariot might have ceased to be used in battle at all in the latter stages of the Assyrian empire and become prestige vehicles, emphasizing continuity with the past.[160] Another possibility is that the chariots served as communication centers for the leaders.[161] As will be discussed below, part of the reason for the change of role of the chariots was the rise of mounted troops taking the traditional role of chariots.

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[153] Ibid., 38 (HSS XV, 99).

[154] Dawson, *First Armies*, 190–92. For more on Assyrian chariots, see Tariq Abdul-Waha Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art* (London: Athlone, 1970), 7–26; Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 101–27; Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 59–75; Noble, "Assyrian Chariotry and Cavalry"; Postgate, "Assyrian Army in Zamua," 93–98; Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 126–30; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 55–164; Sacco, "Art and Imperial Ideology," 208–10; Fabrice De Backer, "La construction d'un char de guerre néo-assyrian," in *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Oskar Kaelin and Hans-Peter Mathys (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2016), 3:751–62.

[155] RIMA 3:47, A.0.102.8, 47.

[156] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 104 fig. 56; fig.

The Horse Lists found at Fort Shalmaneser (dating to the time of Sargon II) provide a glimpse at the specifics of the number and types of chariots in the Assyrian army. The following short selection is the summary of the number of horses and mules: “Total 2,205 horses, 177 mules. Grand total 2,382.”[162] The Horse Lists also describe three kinds of chariots: “the light, 2-horse chariot, (GIŠ.GIGIR) GÌR.2, which had been used for the royal bodyguard, *ša šēpē*, in Nuzi times; the (GIŠ.GIGIR) GAB, probably a heavier chariot; and the most heavily armoured chariot, (GIŠ.GIGIR) *tahlipi*.”[163] A list of troops at Zamua also clarifies the type of people associated with chariots in the Assyrian army: “Ten chariots, two wagons. Ten (teams) of horses, ten (teams) of mules, total twenty teams. Ninety-seven cavalry-horses. Eleven chariot-drivers, twelve ‘third-riders’, ten nobles, 53 grooms. [Twenty] team- commanders: total 106 chariot troops.”[164] A list of

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56 is from an Assurbanipal relief in Berlin (VA 961) in Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 70. For another example from Assurbanipal, see ibid., pl. 69 (Louvre AO 19909).

[157] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 29, no. 16 (from the Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection); for a similar example, see ibid., pl. 314, no 388 (BM 124804).

[158] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 130–32; Nadali, “Assyrian Open Field Battles,” 134–35.

[159] Stillman and Tallis, *Armies of the Ancient Near East*, 60.

[160] Noble, “Assyrian Chariotry and Cavalry.”

[161] Postgate, “Assyrian Army in Zamua,” 98.

[162] Dalley and Postgate, *The Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 167.

[163] Ibid., 34.

[164] Postgate, “Assyrian Army in Zamua,” 90; for more on the roles of each of these individuals, see ibid., 93–95.

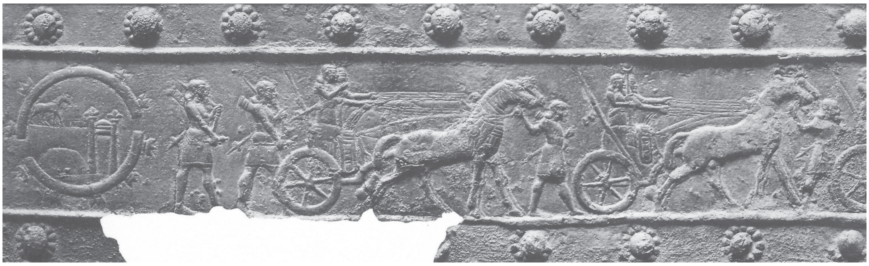

Fig. 4.14. Assyrian chariot from Shalmaneser III. Band 1 of Balawat Gates in British Museum. Photograph from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 1.

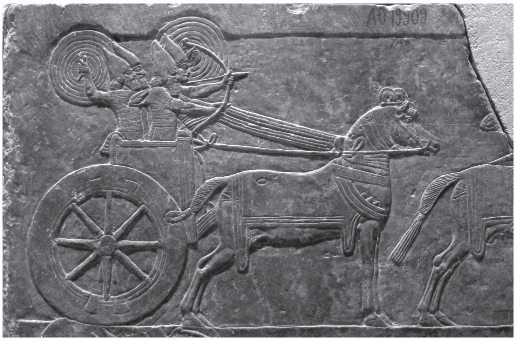

Fig. 4.15. Four-man Assyrian chariot. Louvre AO 19909. Photoh courtesy of Mbzt, Wikimedia Commons.

chariot troops from the reign of Sargon II includes references to a handful of horse trainers (SAA 11.123).

Although they were powerful, chariots also caused problems. Shamash-metu-uballit, a son of Esarhaddon, wrote to his father for permission to fix a chariot wheel he broke. "Yesterday, when I was coming after the king, I entered the centre of Nineveh. There were bricks at the king's guard. [*The whe*]*el* of the chariot hit them (and) broke instantly. [N]ow, let the king, my lord, give an order, so that they may do the work on it" (SAA 16.25). Transporting chariots across rough terrain could also be difficult, such as when chariots had to be taken across rivers in a boat (BM 124541; BM 124543) or taken apart to be carried across mountains.[165]

Horses for chariots were valuable due to the training required. After one battle Sennacherib gathered the horses and chariots of his defeated enemy, who had been galloping about the battlefield on their own after their drivers had died: "I brought back all together the chariots along with their horses, whose drivers had been killed in the thick of (that) mighty battle and which had themselves been released so that they galloped about on their own."[166] In his eighth campaign (against Urartu), Sargon II encountered the people of Subi, who trained horses for battle.

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[165] Sennacherib had his men carry his chariot on their necks in the mountains; see RINAP 3.1:52, 3, 21.

> The people who live in that district, of all the peoples in Urartu, have no equal in the training of riding horses. Every year, they take the promising young foals born in their extensive land, which they raise for the royal military. Until they are taken to Subi, the district that the people of Urartu call the land of the Mannaeans, and their potential can be observed, no one rides them, nor are they taught how to advance, turn, and retreat, in training for battle, and harness is withheld from them.[167]

The royal chariot drivers became wealthy, presumably to ensure their loyalty to the crown.[168] Shumma-ilani served as the chariot driver for Sennacherib and spent large amounts of money to buy slaves, a vineyard, a house, and extensive amounts of land.[169] During the reign of Esarhaddon, one of the wealthiest chariot drivers was Remanni-Adad. The following receipt records the purchase of a weaver: "Ahušina, weaver of ṣipratu-garments, servant of Mušezib-Marduk—Remanni-Adad, chariot driver of the king, has contracted and bought him from Mušezib-Marduk for 1 1/2 minas (of silver) by the (mina) of the king" (SAA 6.301).[170]

4.3.5. Later Empires

The Babylonians seemed to have three men per chariot: the commander, the driver, and the third man (who protected the other two in the chariot). It is possible that the chariots were only ceremonial.[171] In his fourth year (when he stayed at home), Nebuchadnezzar II "strengthened his numerous chariotry and cavalry."[172] The Persians employed chariots, but little is known about them from Persian sources.[173] Xenophon records that Cyrus used chariots with scythes on the wheels to cause extra damage to the enemy (*Cyr.* 6.2.7–8), but that they eventually stopped using them because their drivers were often thrown from the chariots or jumped voluntarily, and the resultant chaos caused as many problems for the Persians as their enemies (*Cyr.* 8.8.25–26).[174]

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[166] RINAP 3.1:184, 22, vi.19–22.

[167] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 800; also *COS* 4.42:206.

[168] For more on chariot drivers, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 93–99.

[169] For the full corpus of receipts related to this chariot driver, see SAA 6.34–56; another chariot driver of Sennacherib, Nabu-shumu-ishkun, also became a wealthy man (SAA 6.57–58).

[170] For the entire corpus of receipts related to this officer, see SAA 6.296–350.

[171] MacGinnis, "Role of Babylonian Temples," 498–99.

4.3.6. West Semitic

Chariots appear to have been popular in the West Semitic nations and were used for a very long period of time.[175] Old Kingdom Hittite texts (such as Anitta) refer to Syrian armies employing chariots.[176] An inscription from Kition (in Cyrpus) named a chariot maker.[177] The Hyksos, hailing from Canaan, apparently played an important role in bringing chariot technology to Egypt (see above). Considering the lack of detailed historical knowledge about the Hyksos, it is unclear how they received the knowledge of chariots. A text from Alalakh recorded that a charioteer was issued a bow, connecting chariotry with archery.[178] Bar-Rakib wrote that his father Panamuwa mounted a chariot before battle.[179] Several places in this area became known in later times for employing chariots. The Assyrian king Shalmaneser III emphasized the many chariots that the western kings were able to send against him.[180] Later, a chariot group from Samaria was brought directly into the Assyrian army as a distinct group, most likely emphasizing their exceptional ability.[181]

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[172] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 229.

[173] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 144–52; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 223–25.

[174] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 152–54.

[175] For a study of chariots in the late Bronze Age, see Juan-Pablo Vita, "Le char de guerre en Syria et Palestine au Bronze récent," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 57–70.

[176] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 64–65.

[177] Marguerite Yon, *Kition dans les Textes: Testimonia littéraires et épigraphiques et Corpus des inscription*, Kition-Bamboula 5 (Paris: Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2004), 184, inscr. 1076.

[178] Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 21; for the texts, see Donald J. Wiseman, *The Alalakh Tablets*, BIAAOP 2 (London: British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, 1953), 76, nos. 205–6

[179] *COS* 2.37:158.

According to the reliefs, chariots in the West Semitic world usually employed two men, such as those from Arslan Tash (fig. 4.16) and Tell Halaf.[182] As elsewhere, chariots are often portrayed running over the enemy.[183] One example is the Neo-Hittite relief from Zincirli/Samʾal, in which an enemy with arrows protruding from his back lies on the ground under a horse pulling a chariot.[184] A relief from Carchemish likewise depicts a chariot manned by two soldiers trampling a prone enemy (see fig. 4.17 for a similar relief from Sam'al).[185] The Lachish reliefs include a captured Judean chariot being dragged by several Assyrian soldiers (just to the right of the city of Lachish), which resembles very closely the Assyrian chariots.[186]

Chariots appear frequently in 1 and 2 Kings, where they are often associated with royalty; when Adonijah decided to declare himself king, he gathered chariots to go ahead of him (1 Kgs 1:5). Solomon is recorded as being a dealer of chariots, buying them from Egypt for six hundred shekels and selling them to the kings of Syria (1 Kgs 10:29). Solomon also built chariot cities for his chariots (1 Kgs 9:19; 10:26); other texts record that he had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots (1 Kgs 4:26) and one thousand four hundred chariots (1 Kgs 10:26).[187] Later kings also

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[180] RIMA 3:9–10, A.0.102.1, 53′–80′.

[181] Sargon II's Nimrud Prism in Dalley, "Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry," 36; for another translation, see *COS* 2.118D:295–96.

[182] *ANEP*, 50, no. 165 (National Museum Aleppo); for another chariot relief depicting a lion hunt from Tell Halaf, see Metropolitan 43.135.2. For more on the reliefs of chariots in the West Semitic world, see Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 26–33.

[183] For other examples, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:366–67.

[184] *ANEP*, 53, no. 172 (Istanbul Archaeological Museum Inv. 7725); Sanna Aro, "The Relief on the Slab NKL 2 at Karatepe-Azatiwayaya: Neo-Assyrian Impact at Cilicia?," in Gaspa, *From Source to History*, 15.

[185] Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesi, *The Museum of Anatolian Civilizations* (Ankara: Dönmez Offset Múze Eserleri Turistik Yayinlari, 1997), 152; for a similar relief from Tell Tayinat now in the Antakya Museum, see Ponchia, "Neo-Assyrian *Adê* Protocol," 511.

[186] David Ussishkin, *The Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib* (Tel-Aviv: Tel Aviv University, Institute of Archaeology, 1982), 105.

[187] Identifying stables archaeologically is contested; for a recent defense of seeing stables at Megiddo, see Cantrell, *Horsemen of Israel*, 87–113.

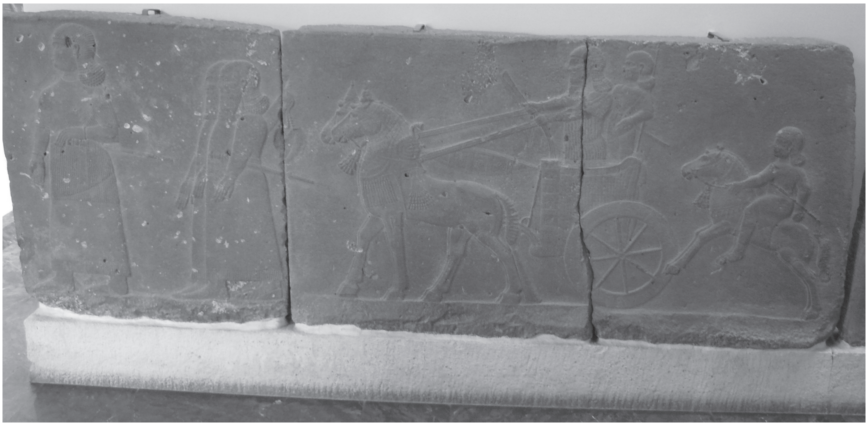

Fig. 4.16. Arslan Tash chariot. Istanbul Archaeological Museum AM 1946, 1947, 1948. Photo courtesy of Schuppi, Wikimedia Commons.

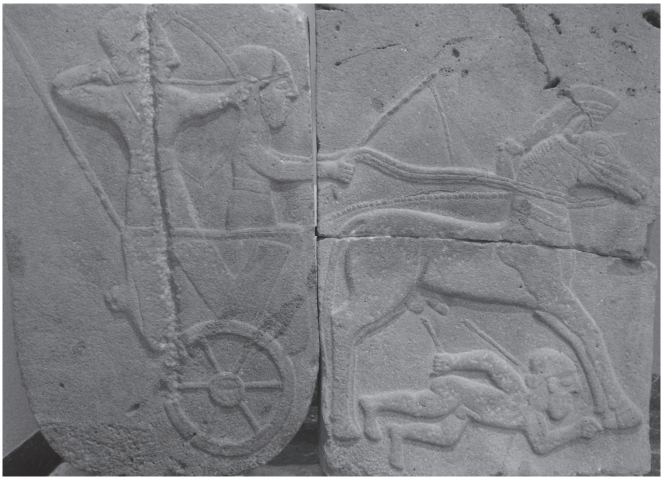

Fig. 4.17. Neo-Hittite chariot from Samʾal. Istanbul Museum of Archaeology. Photo courtesy of Ken Way.

employed chariots. Rehoboam fled home on a chariot to Jerusalem when Israel rebelled (1 Kgs 12:18), while Ahab traveled on a chariot from Mount Carmel to Jezreel (1 Kgs 18:44). Jehoshaphat died in his chariot in a battle against Aram (1 Kgs 22:34–35). Zimri, who usurped the Israelite crown from Elah, served as a commander of half of the chariots of the Israelite army (1 Kgs 16:9). The king of Syria had thirty-two chariot commanders (1 Kgs 22:31). Naaman, the commander of the army of Syria, traveled in a chariot (2 Kgs 5:9). Driving style might be differentiated between different people to some extent since Jehu is recognized based on how he drove his chariot (2 Kgs 9:20). Battles between Aram and Israel involved many chariots, though the numbers are not provided (1 Kgs 20). One account records Jehoahaz being so weak that he had only ten chariots (2 Kgs 13:7). Chariots were powerful enough to become symbolic of heavenly forces as well; Elijah saw chariots of fire (2 Kgs 2:11) and later Elisha showed a young man the chariots of fire surrounding Dothan (2 Kgs 6:15–17). Josiah burned chariots that had been dedicated to the sun (2 Kgs 23:11).

4.4. Horses (and Other Animals)

> Cavalry are the army's fleet observers, the means to pursue a defeated army, to sever supply lines, to strike roving forces.
>
> —T'ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 55[188]

As noted above, chariots were used in battle for centuries before cavalry.[189] Several reasons for this include the ability of the occupant of a chariot to focus more exclusively on combat, more room in the chariot to carry items, a strong herd instinct in horses that was difficult to control, and the lack of a horse shoe to protect the feet of the horses.[190] Additionally, Cantrell describes how the sight, sound, and smell of battle must be overcome before a horse will participate in battle.[191] Along with cavalry, this section will also look briefly at other animals that played a role in battle (including dogs, camels, and lions).

4.4.1. Egypt

The use of cavalry was rare throughout most of Egyptian history. Although riders on horses appear in New Kingdom reliefs, they are usually the enemy fleeing on horses after their chariot has been damaged.[192] However, since representations of armed Egyptian horsemen appear throughout the New Kingdom, they could have been used as mounted scouts.[193] Partridge suggests that the horses were too valuable to be used in battle, but that when the number of horses increased the use of cavalry in battle increased.[194] Based on the reliefs, they were not skilled riders (though it is also possible that the artists did not know how to accurately depict the riders).[195] Stirrups and saddles were not used for horses in the New Kingdom, as stirrups were not used anywhere in the ancient Near East.[196] However, later in Egyptian history Piye, the Nubian who conquered Egypt, loved horses, and the Assyrians were known to trade with Egypt for horses, especially those of Kush.[197] Piye was upset when he examined the stables of the conquered city Hermopolis and saw that the horses were being starved.[198]

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[188] He goes on to say that one cavalryman is equal to eight infantrymen on easy terrain and four on difficult terrain. He also devotes an entire section (59) to cavalry tactics in different kinds of situations.

[189] For more on cavalry in the ancient Near East, see Drews, *Early Riders*; Archer, "Chariotry to Cavalry"; Hacker, "Horse, Wheel, and Saddle."

[190] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 11–12.

[191] Cantrell, *Horsemen of Israel*, 14–24.

[192] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pls. 11, 34; small ver-

Dogs played a role in hunting in Egypt, and a few reliefs portray dogs attacking the enemy in combat as well.[199] For example, one picture of Tutankhamen in battle includes dogs attacking the enemy alongside his chariot (fig. 4.8).[200] A relief of Ramesses II at Beit El-Wali depicts the pharaoh smiting a Libyan while a dog attacks the enemy at the same time.[201] Lions are also sometimes portrayed as fighting with the pharaoh. The relief at Abu Simbel of Ramesses II's battle at Qadesh includes a lion alongside

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sions can be found in the top register of *ANEP*, 108, no. 108, and in the bottom register of *ANEP*, 106, no. 322.

[193] Rommelaere, *Chevaux du Nouvel Empire égyptien*, 129–32; Schulman, "Egyptian Representations of Horsemen"; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 88–89.

[194] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 63.

[195] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 96; Drews, *Early Riders*, 52–53.

[196] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 11–12. M. A. Littauer, "Early Stirrups," in Raulwing, *Selected Writings on Chariots*, 439–51; this was originally published as Littauer, "Early Stirrups," *Antiquity* 55 (1981): 99–105.

[197] Dalley, "Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry," 43–48; Lisa A. Heidorn, "The Horses of Kush," *JNES* 56 (1997): 105–14.

[198] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 483.

[199] Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 80–81; for some of the reliefs, see Rommelaere, *Chevaux du Nouvel Empire égyptien*, 220–23.

[200] *ANEP*, 104, nos. 318–19; the picture on the other side of the box also depicts dogs in battle; see Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 237.

[201] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:164a; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 14; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 259.

the pharaoh's chariot in the midst of the battle, but the lion is in the same position next to the chariot when it is being drawn by his servants before the king on his throne as well.[202] However, in a relief depicting Ramesses II returning with captives from the south, a lion runs alongside his chariot.[203] In a relief from Beit El-Wali, a lion sits in front of Ramesses II's throne when he receives plunder from Asiatics.[204] An inscription in front of the lion reads "He who slays his enemies."[205] A lion accompanies Ramesses III in his march to battle against the Libyans and in his triumphal march back from battle (see fig. 4.18).[206]

4.4.2. Hittite

As in Egypt, cavalry was not used in battle among the Hittites.[207] A seal of a deity riding a horse was found at Kanesh (dated to about 2000) but does not display skill in riding a horse.[208] As noted above, the Egyptians sometimes depicted the Hittites fleeing on horses, but that appears to be after their chariots were damaged (fig. 4.12). Reliefs from Neo-Hittite states portray the use of dogs in hunts (see below for details), implying that perhaps the Hittites had earlier employed dogs in a similar way.

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[202] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:83–84, 169–70; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. 5–6; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 281, 288.

[203] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:181; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 252; for more on trained lions, see Constant De Wit, *Le rôle et le sens du lion dans l'Égypte ancienne* (Leiden: Brill, 1951), 10–15; Brent A. Strawn, *What Is Stronger than a Lion? Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, OBO 212 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2005), 157–61.

[204] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:164a; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 15; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 260; for similar images of a lion alongside Ramesses III, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:141, 143; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pls. 73, 77; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 310–11.

[205] Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, 16.

[206] Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pl. 17; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pls. 73, 77.

[207] Trevor Bryce, "The Hittites at War," in Vidal, *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East*, 75.

[208] Drews, *Early Riders*, 43–44.

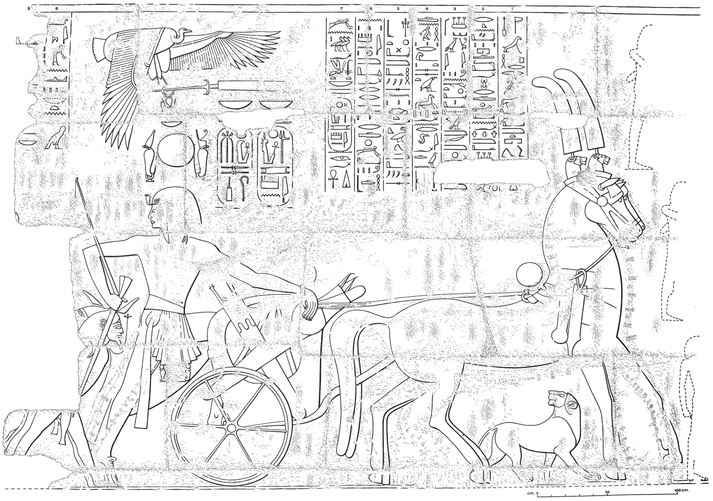

Fig. 4.18. Ramesses III and a lion. From Harold H. Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pl. 73. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

4.4.3. Early Mesopotamia

In the third millennium, various images depict humans riding large animals, some even in martial contexts, but the animals appear to be mostly onagers.[209] It is only during Ur III that horseback riding becomes known. One of the earliest images of a human riding a horse is a seal of Abbakalla of Ur (during the time of Shu-Sin).[210] Various reliefs throughout the early second millennium depict horseback riding, but it appears that throughout the second millennium riding a horse was unusual and perhaps more of a way of demonstrating one's athletic ability.[211] However, although the organized use of horses in battle as cavalry was not present during this time, it is possible that horses were used to transport small groups of men to and from raids, though little evidence remains to prove such a theory.[212]

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[209] P. R. S. Moorey, "Pictorial Evidence for the History of Horse-Riding in Mesopotamia before the Kassites," *Iraq* 32 (1970): 45–46.

[210] Drews, *Early Riders*, 33; David I. Owen, "The 'First Equestrian': An Ur III Glyptic Scene," *ASJ* 13 (1991): 259–73.

[211] For some of these reliefs, see Moorey, "Pictorial Evidence," 47–48. For riding being unusual, see Drews, *Early Riders*, 38–42; for a contrary view (that royalty were conservative and did not reflect current practices), see Moorey, "Pictorial Evidence," 48–49. It has also been suggested that the lower understanding of horses resides in the makers of the reliefs rather than the riders themselves; see David W. Anthony, Dorcas R. Brown, and Christian George, "Early Horseback Riding and Warfare: The Importance of the Magpie Around the Neck," in Olsen, *Horses and Humans*, 148–49.

An illustration of this negative attitude toward horses is found in a Mari letter. Bahdi-Lim instructed Zimri-Lim that he should not enter the city on a horse, but on a chariot or a mule. Drews suggests that the reason was because the royal advisers considered such activity undignified.[213] Other possible reasons for avoiding riding a horse include that the mule is more sure-footed and sweats less.[214] This letter is the only reference to horseback riding so far discovered in the Mari Archives.[215]

> May my lord honour his position as king!
>
> As you are king of the Hanaeans and, secondly, king of the Akkadians, may my lord not ride with horses; may my lord ride (instead) in a cart with mules and thus honour his position as king![216]

One exception might be a letter from Tell Leilan (eighteenth century) that describes for Mutija, the king of Leilan (a city in northern Syria), how Shepallu (an allied king of an unknown land) mounted a horse and chased an enemy. Unfortunately, it is not clear if the battle itself happened on horseback or whether he rode to the battle on the horse and then dismounted.

> Say to Mutija: Thus (says) Šepallu, your brother: Since three days ago the enemy is staying in Zannānum. Yesterday he released the *salhum* in open country, and I mounted a horse, and with 60 men I went to the town Sabum to his *salhum*. I slew 60 men and took 50 prisoners; I chased him (right) to the gate of his fieldcamp, and carried away one (of the) leader(s). My brother should rejoice! Muster the troops and march off to me. Do not hesitate![217]

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[212] Anthony, Brown, and George, "Early Horseback Riding and Warfare," 149–50.

[213] Drews, *Early Riders*, 48–49.

[214] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 68.

[215] Drews, *Early Riders*, 164–65.

[216] Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East*, 1:105 (ARM 6.76 = LAPO 17.732 = Sasson 1.4.b.i.1).

[217] Eidem, *The Royal Archives from Tell Leilan*, 81, letter 8; Eidem notes that "The *salhum* denotes the flocks (and their shepherds/guards) belonging to fixed 'urban type' units, be they larger towns or army camps."

Other animals are not often employed in battle. A mythical text refers to dogs in combat:[218] "The frenzied dogs were wagging tails before the enemy: 'Have you killed a(ny) victim?' were drooling slaver on their forepaws."[219]

4.4.4. Assyrian

As noted above, part of the reason for the change of role of the chariots in Assyria was the rise of mounted troops taking the traditional role of chariots.[220] The inhabitants of the steppe had mastered horsemanship by the beginning of the first millennium and the Assyrians had gradually acquired the skill from them.[221] Mounted troops began to appear in the reign of Assurnasirpal II and became more prevalent thereafter; most likely the Assyrians were the first to create a separate cavalry arm of the military.[222] The earlier reliefs show them in pairs still following the traditional role of the chariots: one man controls the two horses while the other fights (fig. 4.19).[223]

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[218] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 129.

[219] Jacobsen, *Harps That Once*, 245 (Ninurta Myth Lugal-E).

[220] For more on Assyrian cavalry, see Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 117–26; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 13–53.

[221] Drews, *Early Riders*, 73–81; for the view that the influence went the opposite direction (the Assyrians needed to develop a "rough terrain chariot"), see Archer, "Chariotry to Cavalry," 69–73.

[222] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 48.

[223] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, fig. 76 (BM 124544); for the argument that Akkadian had two words for the two kinds of cavalry: *ša pitḫalli* for the main cavalry who shoot the bow and *kallāpu* for the secondary cavalry, see JoAnn Scurlock, "*kallāpu*: A New Proposal for a Neo-Assyrian Military Term," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 725–34. However, although the meaning of *ša pitḫalli* is clear, the meaning of *kallāpu* is much more debated; the term is often associated with scouting; e.g., SAA 5.215 translates it as "dispatch riders"; see also Frederick Mario Fales, "The Assyrian Words for '(Foot) Soldier,'" in *Homeland and Exile: Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Bustenay Oded*, ed. Gershon Galil, Mark Geller, and Alan Millard, VTSup 130 (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 88–91; others view the word as infantry; see Postgate, "Assyrian Army in Zamua," 104–5; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 69–75.

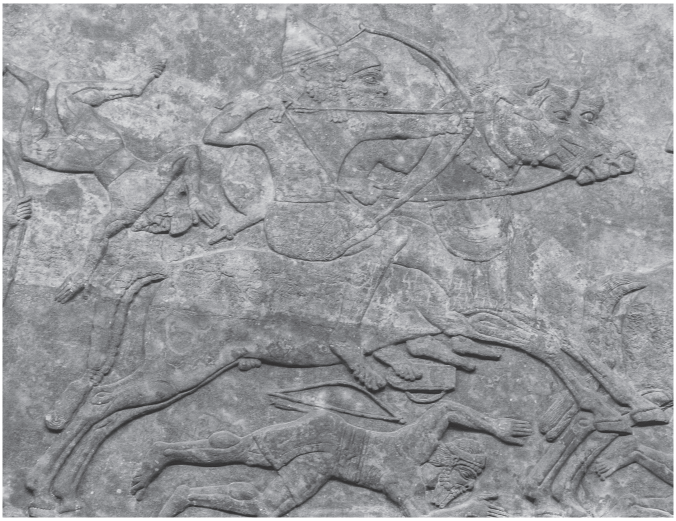

Fig. 4.19. Assyrian cavalry from Assurnasirpal II. BM 124544. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

Under Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon II riders continued in pairs but controlled their own horses while using spears (fig. 4.20).[224] Many examples of armored cavalry begin to appear during the reign of Tiglath-pileser III as well.[225] During the reign of Sennacherib and after, riders operated effectively by themselves and sometimes employed a bow.[226] A relief from Sennacherib shows the cavalry attacking the enemy (who are on foot) using both spears and bows, which appears to indicate two distinct kinds of cavalry.[227] Likewise, a horseman from a relief of Assurbanipal shoots a bow from the back of the horse without a close companion.[228]

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[224] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, fig. 77 (BM 118907); Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 67.

[225] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 154.

[226] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 134–39; Drews, *Early Riders*, 65–68; Nadali, "Assyrian Open Field Battles," 132–33.

[227] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 84, no. 103 (Or.Dr.I.70); for this reconstruction of the cavalry under Sennacherib, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Cavalry and Chariotry)*, 158.

[228] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, fig. 78 (Louvre AO 19909).

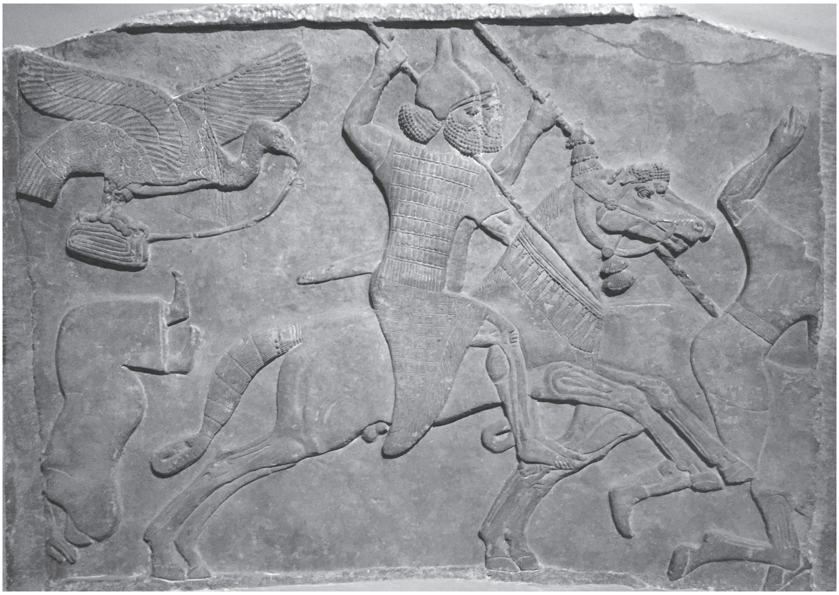

Fig. 4.20. Cavalry under Tiglath-pileser III. BM 118907. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

It is unlikely that the Assyrians used their cavalry to charge the enemy.[229] The imperialism of the Assyrians benefited their skill employing horses in battle, especially under Sargon II when expert charioteers from Samaria and cavalry from Urartu were captured and incorporated into the Assyrian army.[230] The raid, a small attack conducted solely by cavalry calculated to surprise, does not appear to be used by the Assyrians, but the Scythians and Cimmerians (attested in the late Assyrian sources and Herodotus) were most likely raiders.[231]

In a few cases, enemy troops are depicted riding camels, such as the Arabs defeated by Assurbanipal. In one relief from the time of Assurbanipal, each camel has two riders, one who shoots a bow and one who holds a spear (fig. 4.21).[232] In another relief from Tiglath-pileser III, the camel

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[229] 229. Drews, *Early Riders*, 58–59.

[230] 230. Dalley, "Foreign Chariotry and Cavalry."

[231] 231. Drews, *Early Riders*, 105–22.

[232] 232. *ANEP*, 20, no. 63 (BM 124926); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:450–51; Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 33; for another relief of Arabs riding camels, see pl. 32.

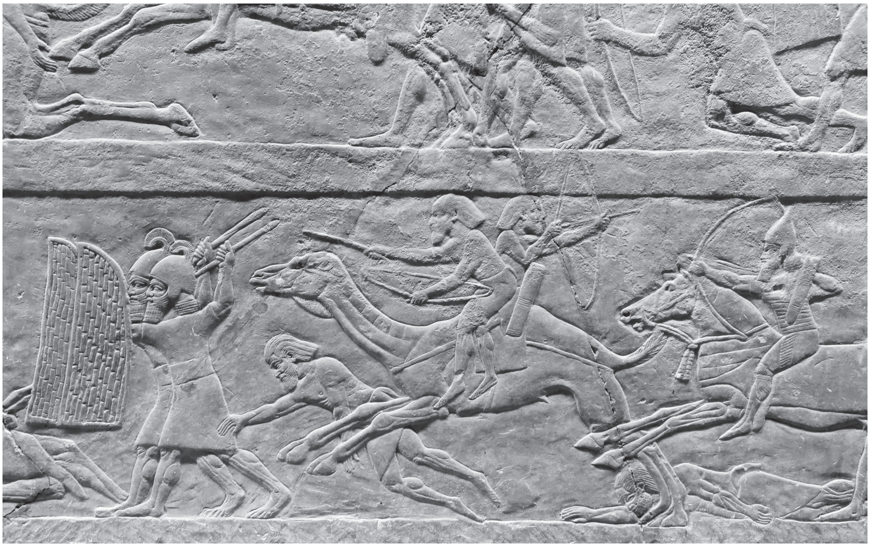

Fig. 4.21. Assyrian relief of Arab camels. BM 124926. Photo courtesy of Todd Bolen, BiblePlaces.com.

has one rider.[233] Dogs do not appear to have been used by the Assyrians in war, but a hunting dog appears in the lion hunting reliefs of Assurbanipal.[234]

4.4.5. Later Empires

The Babylonians employed cavalry, though very little is known about them.[235] Drews speculates that the great numbers of horse riders among the Medes facilitated the defeat of the Assyrians through charges against the Assyrian archers.[236] The mounted riders played an important role in the Persian army according to Greek sources (though cavalry do not appear in Persian monumental reliefs), fulfilling the traditional role formerly filled by chariots: flanking and pursuing.[237] However, when Greek armies denied them space they were less effective.[238] Cyrus used camels in a battle against Croesus in Anatolia in order to cause the enemy cavalry to flee (Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.80). Xenophon highlights the drawback of this feature of the camels causing horses to flee: "The camels, however, did nothing more than frighten the horses; their riders could neither kill any one nor be killed by any of the enemy's cavalry, for not a horse would come near them" (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 7.1.48 [Miller, LCL]).

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[233] *ANEP*, 132, no. 375 (BM 118878); Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 13–14; for other reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III with camels, see ibid., pls. 15–17, 25–26.

[234] Not in war, contra Adrienne Mayor, *Greek Fire, Poison Arrows, and Scorpion Bombs: Biological and Chemical Warfare in the Ancient World* (Woodstock: Overlook, 2003), 190–91; not only does Mayor misdate the image (BM 91911) to 600 (rather than 1750) and call it a stone relief (it is clay), she also says that the man is holding a shield (it is a rope) and that the dog is armored (it does not appear to be so). Hunting dogs: Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 14 (BM 118915); for more on these dogs, see Pauline Albenda, "The Dogs of the North Palace," *NABU* 2 (2015): 72–74, no. 48.

[235] MacGinnis, "Role of Babylonian Temples," 498.

4.4.6. West Semitic

Reliefs from Tell Halaf depict cavalry from the tenth century (fig. 4.22), as well as a warrior riding a camel (fig. 4.23).[239] An inscription from the Neo-Hittite king Wasusarmas (eighth century) records several cavalry battles.[240] The Old Testament records many horses belonging to Israel, though it appears that most were used for chariots.[241] The word פרש might refer to horsemen apart from chariots (1 Kgs 1:5), as does סוס sometimes (1 Kgs 20:21; 2 Kgs 5:9). Solomon is recorded as having twelve thousand horsemen (1 Kgs 4:26; 10:26). Solomon imported horses from Egypt and Kue for 150 shekels of silver each (1 Kgs 10:28–29). After a defeat, Ben-Hadad fled on a horse, accompanied by horsemen (1 Kgs 20:20). Jehoahaz's army was reduced to fifty horsemen at one point (2 Kgs 13:7). The Israelites used men on horseback as scouts, such as when they were sent to investigate whether the Arameans had truly left the siege of Samaria (2 Kgs 7:13–15).

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[236] Drews, *Early Riders*, 127–28.

[237] However, cavalry do appear on other types of mediums; for an overview see Christopher Tuplin, "All the King's Horse: In Search of Achaemenid Persian Cavalry," in Fagan, *New Perspectives on Ancient Warfare*, 104–20.

[238] Littauer and Crouwel, *Wheeled Vehicles and Ridden Animals*, 154–58; Drews, *Early Riders*, 130–38; however, Tuplin's detailed study of the use of cavalry by the Persians shows that it is difficult to know how accurate the Greek witness was concerning the Persian cavalry; Tuplin, "All the King's Horse."

[239] *ANEP*, 50, no. 164 (Berlin VA 8851); 59, no. 188 (Walters Art Museum 21.15); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:360–61.

[240] Payne, *Iron Age Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions*, 57–59.

[241] For more on horses in Israel, see Cantrell, *Horsemen of Israel*, 35–59.

Like the chariots of fire, horses of fire also appear as symbolic of strength (2 Kgs 2:11; 6:17).

Although dogs are not connected directly with combat, various reliefs portray them participating in hunts, such as a Neo-Hittite relief from Malatya that shows two men in a chariot accompanied by a dog chasing a deer.[242] In another relief from Malatya, two men in a chariot with a dog pursue a lion.[243]

4.5. Sieges

> Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy; next best is to disrupt his alliances; the next best is to attack his army; the worst policy is to attack cities. Attack cities only when there is no alternative. To prepare the shielded wagons and make ready the necessary arms and equipment requires at least three months; to pile up earthen ramps against the walls an additional three months will be needed. If the general is unable to control his impatience and orders his troops to swarm up the wall like ants, one-third of them will be killed without taking the city. Such is the calamity of these attacks.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 3.4–9

Throughout the ancient Near East, sieges were common because they were often the only hope of weaker armies who wished to survive an encounter with an empire.[244] Since armies were often not able to stay in the field for extended periods of time, weaker armies could wait out a siege and realistically hope that the larger army would be forced to return home. However, attacking armies employed a variety of methods to defeat a fortified city quickly, including rams, tunneling, sapping, ladders, and siege towers

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[242] Louvre AM 255; for more details, a translation of the inscription, a picture, and a line drawing, see John David Hawkins, *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, CHLI 1 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 1:321, 3:pl. 156.

[243] Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesi, *Museum of Anatolian Civilizations*, 146; Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, pl. 6.

[244] For more on sieges in the ancient Near East, see Israel Eph'al, "Ways and Means to Conquer a City," in Parpola, *Assyria 1995*, 49–54; Paul Bentley Kern, *Ancient Siege Warfare* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 9–85; Sarah Melville and Duncan J. Melville, "Observations on the Diffusion of Military Technology: Siege Warfare in the Near East and Greece," in *From the Banks of the Euphrates: Studies in Honor of Alice Louise Slotsky*, ed. Micah Ross (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 145–68; Burke, *Walled Up To Heaven*; Eph'al, *City Besieged*.

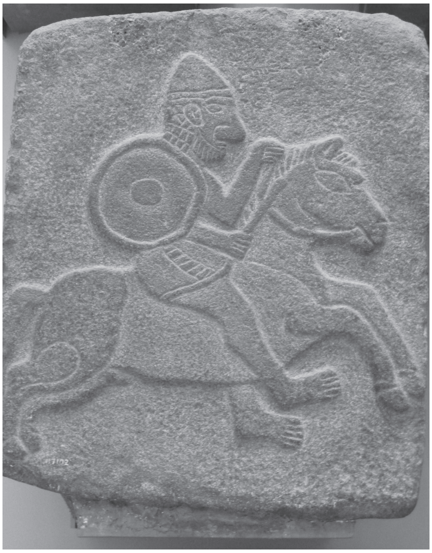

Fig. 4.22. Tell Halaf horse rider. British Museum 117102. Photo courtesy of Deror_avi, Wikimedia Commons.

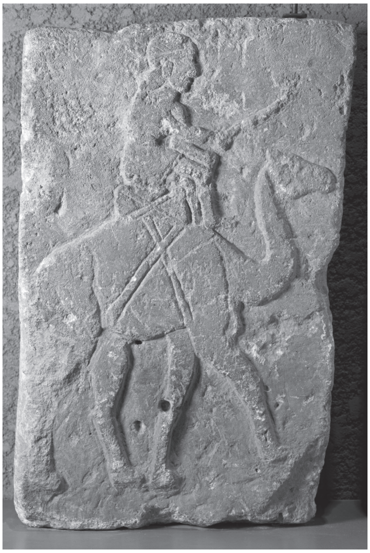

Fig. 4.23. Tell Halaf camel rider. Walters Art Museum 21.15. Photo courtesy of Walters Art Museum, Wikimedia Commons.

(deception in sieges will be covered in §4.8). If everything else failed and the army was powerful enough, they could even afford to wait out the besieged for years at a time.[245]

4.5.1. Egyptian

Egyptians practiced many sieges throughout their history.[246] As part of the fighting within Egypt during the First Intermediate period (about 2100 BCE), Ankhtifi of Moʾalla, a nomarch (provincial administrator) sailed south to attack an enemy who had barricaded himself in a town. However, Ankhtifi recognized that he was not powerful enough to attempt a siege and was reduced to simply calling his enemy a coward.[247] Old Kingdom tomb reliefs depict a siege ladder with wheels as well as an attack on a walled town (with sappers apparently trying to break a hole in the wall).[248] The tomb of Intef (Thebes 386), a general at Thebes during the Eleventh Dynasty, contains a picture of a primitive siege tower. The tower is like a ladder and is open on all sides; it could be wheeled toward the wall.[249] In the Middle Kingdom, wall paintings from Beni-hasan might show a battering ram being used against a city, though it more likely depicts an attempt by the attackers to interfere with the defenders on the wall to create an undefended space.[250]

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[245] Although the historicity of the claim is dubious, Herodotus claimed an Egyptian siege lasted twenty-nine years (*Hist.* 2.157).

[246] For a detailed survey, see Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 97–156.

[247] See García, "War in Old Kingdom Egypt," 33–34.

Many pharaohs during the New Kingdom practiced sieges. Ahmose was a general who served under several pharaohs (Ahmose I, Amenhotep I, and Thutmose I); under Ahmose I he played an important role in the defeat of the Hyksos, including the conquest of Avaris, a Hyksos city in the Delta. He also took part in a three-year siege of Sharuhen, a Hyksos city in Canaan.[251] Thutmose III besieged Megiddo as part of his campaign to subdue Canaan, though not many details are given about the siege except that they constructed an enclosure around the city.[252]

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[248] For a color picture of the siege ladder, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:147 (Tomb of Kaemheset in Saqqarah from the Sixth Dynasty). Sappers: *ANEP*, 101, no. 311 (Tomb of Anta in Deshasheh); Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 140–42; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:146; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:4.

[249] Schulman, "Battle Scenes of the Middle Kingdom," 168–70; for a picture, see Vogel, *Fortifications of Ancient Egypt*, 56–57; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 447.

[250] In favor of a battering ram: Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:158–59; Schulman, "Battle Scenes of the Middle Kingdom," 177. Against it: Nick Wernick, "Once More Unto the Breach: A Re-Examination of Beni Hasan's 'Battering Ram' and 'Glacis,'" *ZÄS* 143 (2016): 106–28.

[251] *ANET*, 233; *COS* 2.1:5–7; *AEL* 2:12–14; *ARE* 2:6–9,17–18, 33–35.

[252] *ARE* 2:185–86; *ANET*, 237; *AEL* 2:33; *COS* 2.2A:12. Redford argues that the Eighteenth Dynasty pharaohs were unskilled at besieging (they were more likely to destroy the surrounding land and move on to the next city) and that it was not until the Nineteenth Dynasty that the pharaohs were able to successfully besiege cities; see Donald B. Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 219. However, others have argued that he has overread the evidence and not placed it sufficiently in its historical context, especially the Egyptian desire to fight quick battles; see Aaron A. Burke, "Canaan under Siege: The History and Archaeology of Egypt's War in Canaan during the Early Eighteenth Dynasty," in Vidal, *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East*, 56–57; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 97, 153–54.

The Amarna letters refer to many sieges. Rib-Hadda, the king of Gubla (Byblos), wrote often to Pharaoh Akhenaten to ask for his help; in one letter, he described how he could not go to an allied town (Sumur) because he would be blockaded in the town by enemy ships on one side and an enemy army on land on the other side (EA 104). Biridiya, king of Megiddo, wrote that he was keeping watch in the midst of a severe attack by the Habiru. During the day he kept watch with his chariots in the field and by night from the walls (EA 243). In another letter he told Akhenaten that his city was besieged by Labʾayu the king of Shechem (in the highlands) after the Egyptian troops left; now he requested a garrison to rescue the city.

> We are thus unable to do the plucking, and we are unable to go out of the city gate because of Labʾayu. When he learned that archers were not co[ming o]ut, he immediately [de]termined to take Magidda. May the king save his city lest Labʾayu seize it. Look, the city is consumed by pestilence, by…. So may the king give a garrison of 100 men to guard his city lest Labʾayu seize it. Look, Labʾayu has no other purpose. He seeks simply the seizure of Magidda.[253]

Many reliefs depict sieges in the New Kingdom, especially under Seti I, Ramesses II, and Ramesses III.[254] In these reliefs larger than life soldiers defend the towns against the Egyptian attack. Ladders are most frequently used to gain access to the city (siege engines are rare).[255] The siege of Dapur by Ramesses II shows the pharaoh to the left of the relief in his chariot shooting the enemy with his bow, while in the center the enemy is fleeing toward their city and the Egyptian army is slaughtering them. To the right of the relief is the city itself; archers on both sides are shooting at each other while other Egyptians hiding behind their shields climb a siege ladder (fig. 4.24).[256] A relief of Ramesses II from Beit El-Wali shows an

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[253] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 298 (EA 244).

[254] For a sampling of reliefs depicting New Kingdom sieges, see *ANEP*, 107–9, nos. 324, 327–30; 111–12, nos. 333–34; 116–17, nos. 344–46; the sieges from Seti I are also depicted more clearly in Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*. In a different genre, the reference in P.Anast. 1 to building a ramp might refer to a siege ramp; see Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 104; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 119–21.

[255] Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 152.

[256] Relief also found in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:107–9; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 278.

Egyptian with an axe apparently trying to break through the city wall (fig. 4.25).[257] In many cases the defenders are supplicating someone for mercy, though it is debated whether they are capitulating to the Egyptians or they are calling on their gods to help them (see the discussion in §8.2 for more details).

Another group of sieges appears in the Late period during the time of Piye, who received word of the rise of Tefnakht (a Libyan who controlled much of the Delta region), including his siege of Heracleopolis.

> Behold, [he is] beleaguering Heracleoplis, and he has made himself an enclosing uroborous,[258] not allowing goers to go nor allowing entrants to enter, while fighting every day. In its full circuit he has measured it, with every count knowing his (assigned) wall, while he stations every man among the counts and rulers of estates to besiege his section.[259]

When Piye heard of this, he summoned his troops and began a campaign against the Libyan. Early in his campaign against him, Piye laid siege to Hermopolis (Khmum), on the border between Lower and Upper Egypt, employing similar tactics as the Libyan.

> He made for himself a camp at the southwest of Hermopolis, keeping a stranglehold on it daily. A talus was made to clothe the wall, and a platform was erected to elevate the archers when shooting and the slingers when slinging stones, slaying the people among them daily. Days passed, and Hermopolis became foul to the nose, deprived of its ability to breathe.[260]

The final battle of the campaign was a siege of Memphis, which had been prepared for a long siege. Piye's troops propose a variety of ways to attack the city, but the king rejected their ideas and decided to attack through the harbor (for the part of the attack involving boats, see §4.6.1).

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[257] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:163; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 12; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 259.

[258] This is the image of a snake eating its tail, referring to the idea of a complete enclosure.

[259] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 478.

[260] Ibid., 481–82.

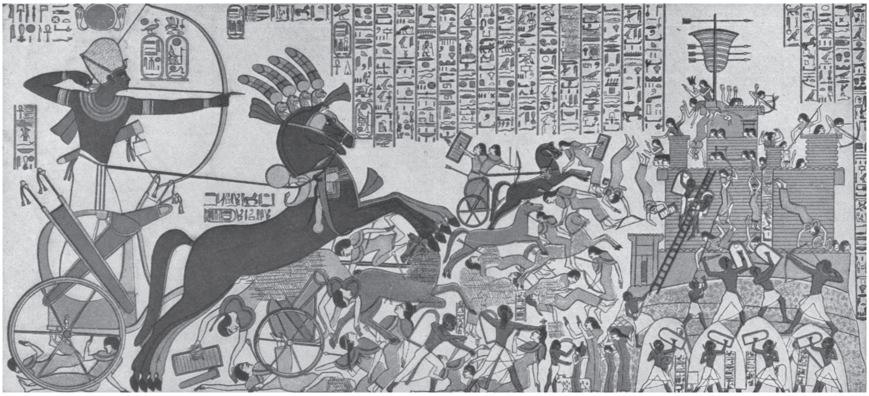

Fig. 4.24. Ramesses II's siege of Dapur. Drawing of relief from temple at Luxor. From volume 6 of the *Nordisk familjebok* (1907).

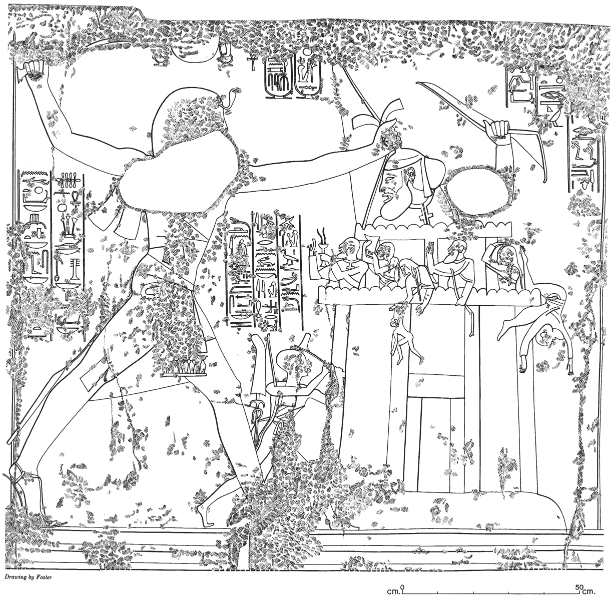

Fig. 4.25. Ramesses II's siege of a Syrian town. From Herbert Ricke, George R. Hughes, and Edward F. Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 12. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

> Then His Majesty saw that it was strong, the enclosure walls high with new construction, and the battlements supplied in strength. No way of attacking it was found. Every man proceeded to state his opinion among the troops of His Majesty, entailing every tactic of fighting, with every

> man saying, "Let us lay siege [to Memphis.] Behold its army is numerous," while others were saying, "Make a ramp against it so that we elevate the ground to its ramparts. Let us put together a (siege) platform, erecting masts and using sails for it. Let us divide it by this means on every side of it, with talus and […] on its north, to elevate the ground to its rampart so that we might find a path for our feet."[261]

4.5.2. Hittite

One of the earliest references to a siege in Hittite literature is found in the Mama Letter (perhaps dated to about 1900 BCE) that described a nine-year siege.[262] The most detailed account of a siege among the Hittites is the siege of Urshu (north of Carchemish, west of the Euphrates river), a humorous account of the incompetence of the Hittite king's subordinates. The text might date from the time of Hattusili I (1650–1620), one of the first kings of the Hittite Old Kingdom. The first selection below describes the broken battering ram and the new Hurrian style battering ram called for by the king; the second selection illustrates the difficulty of completely enclosing a city.[263]

> Thus said the king: "When the city comes to ruin, an offense will have been committed, a s[in] brought about!" They answered: "We will give battle eightfold. The city will (indeed) come to ruin, but we will eradicate the offense." The king approved. (Then) they broke the battering-ram. The king was furious, (his) face (was) unpleasant—"They are always bringing me foul news! May the Storm-god wash you away!" The king continued: "You shall not continually *slack off*. Construct a battering-ram of Hurrian type and let it be put in place! Make siege-works and set (them) up! Cut a great battering-ram from the mountains of the city Ḫaššu and let it be put in place! Begin to pile up earth! When you are finished let each take his place! Let them (the enemy) give battle, but their strategy will be foiled."
>
> Thus said Šariwanda: "Winter is here—let some continually heap up earth, but let the others continually *rest*!" The king approved.

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[261] Ibid., 485–86.

[262] Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 34; for more on Hittite sieges, see Itamar Singer, "On Siege Warfare in Hittite Texts," in Cogan, *Treasures on Camels' Humps*, 250–65.

[263] For an artist's reconstruction of a Hittite battering ram in action against a city gate, see Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 36.

> While they did nothing to the city, many servants of the king were hit, and many died. The king became angry and said: “Guard the roads—keep watch on those who would enter the city and those who would go out of the city! Let no (one) go over to the (other) enemies—to the city Zaruar, to the city Aleppo, to the Hurrian army, or to Zuppa!” They replied: “We will be on guard. Eighty chariots (and) eight armies encircled the city. May the heart of the king not be troubled. I am in place!” Then a fugitive came out of the city and said: “The servant of the man of Aleppo has entered five times; the servant of Zuppa is present in the city; the men of Zaruar go in and out; the servant of ‘the Son of the Storm-god,’ my lord, goes back and forth, saying: ‘I have gathered these (quantities of) silver, garments, oxen (and) sheep, and I will give (these) to the Hurrian troops. If they should agree, wages seven times I will deliver! If I bring ‘sons of the land’ twice I will deliver.’” Before the king …[264]

Mursili II recounts in the Deeds of Suppiluliuma how his father Suppiluliuma I defeated Mitanni when he fought a siege against Carchemish that lasted only eight days. Unfortunately, the means of the defeat of the city is not recorded.[265] A letter written by a military official to the king (perhaps Suppiluliuma I?) discussed the difficulties of conquering a city when the king had commanded them not to destroy the wall (probably so it could be reused by the Hittites in the future). The identity of the *epureššar* (which fell into the moat in this case) is unclear. It is not a battering ram, since they have been forbidden to break the wall. A large siege engine that would have brought the Hittite soldiers up to the top of the wall is a possibility.[266]

> And concerning the fact that my lord dispatched Tuttu in order to storm (the enemy city)…, but you did not let the city wall be knocked down: Every time we tried to storm (the town), we did not succeed in storming (it). And every time we tried to tunnel under the town wall, we didn’t succeed there either. If they do not knock the town wall down, it will be impossible to storm (the town).
>
> But if you, my lord, say the following: “Why will it be impossible?” Because inside the town wall one (subsidiary) wall is four *šekan* and another is three *šekan*. But in this direction (or: for this reason) the

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[264] Beckman, “Siege of Uršu Text,” 25–27.

[265] *COS* 1.74:190 (*CTH* 40).

[266] For a discussion, see Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 341.

> *epureššar* went into the moat on one side, and for that reason it was impossible for us.
>
> Concerning the fact that Tuttu is on the point of coming, it is like…! He will bring the (replacement?) *epureššar*. Look for him there![267]

Mursili II described how he laid siege to Puranda: "I went and surrounded Puranda and shut it up; I took away its water."[268] However, in spite of surrounding the city his enemy escaped the city and Mursili II was forced (unsuccessfully) to chase him. Based on the length of many Hittite sieges during the Hittite Old Kingdom compared to sieges described in the Mari texts, Hamblin suggests that the Hittites were not very skilled at sieges at this time.[269]

Early in his reign, Mursili II faced significant problems in the west when Uhhaziti (king of Arzawa Minor) allied with several other kings. The Hittite king marched there in the third year of his reign to deal with these enemies, as recorded in his annals. After he defeated Uhhaziti, Mursili II chased a group of captives to Mount Arinnanda (near Ephesus), where he besieged them and forced them to surrender based on their lack of food and water. Although not technically a siege of a city, the text illustrates how a starvation siege functioned.

> This Mt. Arinnanda is very inaccessible. It stretches out into the sea and furthermore is very high and thickly wooded. Finally, it is rocky and not suitable for the ascent of chariotry. All of the civilian captives occupied it, and all of the (enemy) infantry were up there. And because it was not suitable for the ascent of chariotry, I, [My Majesty], ran on foot before the army. I went up Mt. Arinnanda on foot. I kept exerting pressure on the captives through hunger and thirst, and when hunger and thirst weighed heavily upon them, the captives came down and fell down at my feet, (saying): "May you, our lord, not destroy us, but take us into your service! Take us up to Hattusa!"[270]

The Hittites also destroyed food supplies to compel their enemies to surrender. One text that records a successful example of this tactic involves the destruction of the food and killing of the king; the son (who became king in his place) submitted to the Hittite king. "As the kings of Nuḫašši (are) hostile, destroy their grain immediately and harass them! And Kurunta went and led the troops (and) charioteers there and destroyed [the grai]n of the land of Nuḫašši and harassed them."[271]

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[267] Ibid., 342–43 (*KBo* 18.54; *CTH* 188); for a discussion of this letter, see Singer, "On Siege Warfare in Hittite Texts," 257–65.

[268] *COS* 2.16:86, year 4 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[269] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 300.

[270] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts*, 35–37 (*CTH* 61).

4.5.3. Early Mesopotamian

Sieges were widely practiced throughout early Mesopotamia.[272] According to a later legend about Sargon the Great in the "Sargon Chronicle," when an enemy coalition besieged him in Agade, he broke out and defeated them on the field of battle.[273] The grandson of Sargon, Naram-Sin, told of two kings who rebelled against him who were sufficiently powerful that they were able to besiege Naram-Sin. Rather than endure a siege, the king counterattacked and was victorious.[274] Dadusha, the king of Eshnunna, defeated Qabara in a ten-day siege through "a surrounding siege wall, by heaping up earth, with the help of a breach, an attack and my great strength."[275] A fragmentary text describes Hammurabi defeating Eshnunna through flooding the city.[276]

The Mari letters frequently refer to sieges.[277] In one letter, Shamshi-Adad instructed his son to bring siege materials (siege towers and a battering ram) in the boats with the rest of the combat equipment (ARM 2.7 = LAPO 17.465). One letter describes the effect of a battering ram. "The battering ram has come closer to the wall and has pulled down 6 *qanûm* of the wall. This construction is in ruins."[278] A letter from Bahdi-Lim to Zimri-Lim reported that "Concerning the battering ram (named) 'Haradan,' you wrote to me saying: 'I placed it in the sanctuary of my father.'"[279] According to Vidal, most likely the battering ram was being honored for its service in battle.[280] Ilshu-Nasir cut different types of trees for siege equipment (ARM 27.8). Ishme-Dagan reported to his brother Yasmah-Adad about a siege in which he employed siege towers and sapping to conquer a town in eight days (ARM 1.135 = LAPO 17.529). Another letter describes the use of siege towers in more detail. "The town of Nilimmar that Ishme-Dagan besieged, Ishme-Dagan has [now] taken. As long as the siege-ramps did not reach to the heights of the top of the city [wall], he could not seize the town. As soon as the siege-ramps reached the top of the city [wall], he gained mastery over this town."[281]

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[271] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 49 (*KBo*. 4.4 obv I 41′–44′; *CTH* 61.II.5.B).

[272] On sieges in early Mesopotamia, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 215–36; Jack M. Sasson, "Siege Mentality: Fighting at the City Gate in the Mari Archvies," in Yona, *Marbeh Ḥokmah*, 465–78.

[273] *ANET*, 266.

[274] RIME 2:104–5, 2.1.4.6, 1.10′–ii.22′.

[275] *ANEHST*, 99.

[276] Matthew Rutz and Piotr Michalowski, "The Flooding of Ešnunna, the Fall of Mari: Hammurabi's Deeds in Babylonian Literature and History," *JCS* 68 (2016): 15–43; however, for a reading of this text that does not involve flooding, see N. Ziegler, "The Flooding of Ešnunna?," *NABU* 2 (2016): 70–71, no. 41.

[277] For more on siege warfare at Mari, see Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 2:294–99; Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 33–34; Vidal and Fenollós, "Fortification System in Tell Abu Fahd."

However, the defenders were not helpless in the face of these tactics. In one letter, Yamsum, a servant of Zimri-Lim, informed him that the besieged in Sharraya had destroyed the siege towers and leaners (ladders?) by fire: "Šarraya placed lumps of pitch opposite a tower and then lit a fire under the lumps of pitch, and the tower collapsed. And the fire consumed the leaners."[282] Another letter reported that when the ramp reached the top of the walls, the defenders broke out of the town and put two large holes into the ramp (ARM 14.104+ = LAPO 17.548 = Sasson 3.5.b.ii). A letter from the governor of Saggaratum to Zimri-Lim described how the townsmen attempted to neutralize a siege mound via tunneling (ARM 6.65 = LAPO 17.850). Ibal-pi-El wrote to the king concerning a siege against an Elamite town in which the defenders prevented the attackers from building a ramp to go over the city walls, apparently through water flowing in channels near the wall.

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[278] Vidal and Fenollós, "Fortification System in Tell Abu Fahd," 205 (ARM 10.171 = LAPO 18.1086).

[279] Jordi Vidal, "Prestige Weapons in an Amorite Context," *JNES* 70 (2011): 250 (ARM 6.63 = LAPO 16.388).

[280] For possible images of battering rams and siege towers on early Mesopotamian seals, see Davide Nadali, "Representations of Battering Rams and Siege Towers in Early Bronze Age Glyptic Art," *Historiae* 6 (2009): 39–52.

[281] Albert E. Glock, "Warfare in Mari and Early Israel" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1968), 173.

[282] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 300 (ARM 26.318 = Sasson 1.3.c.i.1); for another reference to these leaners, see ARM 26.503; for other references to the defenders setting siege equipment on fire, see ARM 27.141; ARM 27.142.

> Once the enemy realized that a decision was formed in Ḫiritum, he tried twice to build a ramp, but my lord's troops blocked him and would not let him build the ramp. When he did not succeed with the ramp, the enemy realized about his ramp that we and the servants of Hammurabi *enlarged* the channels and opened (them) ahead of his ramp (so that) (it carried) the ramp toward the river.[283]

Ishme-Dagan reported to his brother Yasmah-Adad about the siege of Malgium (east of Babylon and the Tigris River) that had ended when their king paid fifteen talents to the three besieging armies (ARM 1.129 = LAPO 17.544 = *ANEHST*, 120). Defenders could build counter ramps inside the city to defend against siege ramps (ARM 27.141). Long-term sieges are also attested. Ishme-Dagan reported to Jasmah-Addu that a siege was going well: "The land has succumbed to me, but the citadel of Ninēt I have not yet taken. A deserter from the town said: 'The inhabitants are starving!' As long as I have not taken the citadel of Ninēt, I shall not march elsewhere."[284]

Other letters from the time period also describe sieges. In a letter found at Leilan, a general wrote to his lord that Kirija (a local king) had commanded him not to send out a sortie when besieged.[285] In another letter the official Ewri asked Till-Abnu, the king of Leilan in the eighteenth century, if he should gather his people into forts when an enemy had raided his land.[286] Other genres provide limited information about sieges. The most famous document about sieges is the Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur.[287] The Ur III dynasty oversaw a large area of southern Babylon from about 2100–2000, but the city fell under Amorite pressure and was conquered by the Elamites. Although these laments were composed several centuries after the event, they paint a powerful image of the despair of a city under siege (see quotations in §5.8.3). Administrative documents sometimes provide evidence of selling of family members during a siege to keep them alive.[288] In an unexpected genre for source material about sieges, Babylonian mathematical texts describe how to calculate how much labor and time would be needed in a siege. It appears it was not a practical exercise for an army scribe, but a theoretical problem for a student.[289]

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[283] Sasson, "Siege Mentality," 472 (ARM 2.30$^+$ = LAPO 17.581).

[284] Eidem and Læssøe, *Shemshara Archves 1*, 41 (A.2728 = LAPO 17.515).

[285] Eidem, *Royal Archives from Tell Leilan*, 223 (Tell Leilan letter 147).

[286] Ibid., 184 (Tell Leilan letter 110).

[287] *ANET*, 455–63; *COS* 1.166:535–39; Piotr Michalowski, *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*, MC 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989), 61–63; Samet, *Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur*.

[288] C. Zaccagnini, "War and Famine at Emar," *Or* 64 (1995): 92–109.

> With earthworks (of volume) 1,30,0 I shall seize a city hostile to Marduk. From the base of the earthwork, I went a length of 32 up to my front. The height of the earthwork is 36. What length must I stamp in order to seize the city? What is the length from the front of the *ḫurḫurum*? You, take the reciprocal of 32 and you see 0;1,52,30. Multiply 0;1,52,30 by the height, 36, and you see 1;7,30. Take the reciprocal of 6, the width of the earthwork and you see 0;10. Multiply 1,30,0 by 0;10 and you see 15,0. Double 15,0 and you see 30,0. Multiply 1;7,30 by 30,0 and you see 33,45. What is the square root of 33,45? The root is 45. 45 is the height of the wall. How much does 45, the height of the wall, exceed 36, the height of the earthwork? It exceeds it by 9. Take the reciprocal of 1;7,30 and you see 0;53,20. Multiply 0;53,20 by 0 and you see 8. 8, the length in front of you, you stamp.[290]

The final genre that portrays siege warfare is oracle questions. This oracle from Nimrud questions Shamash and Adad about the success of a siege of one of his cities by a coalition of hostile troops, listing all the various tactics used in a siege. Although it dates from the first millennium, the question relates to events of the reign of Samsu-ditana, who reigned in Babylon in 1600 BCE.

> The enemy troops, […] as many as there are, who have rebelled against Marduk and Samsu-ditana, son of Ammi-ṣaduqa, king of Babylon and are constantly seeking out stratagems and hostile acts, from the least <to the greatest>, they will not, will they, either by day time or by night time, against this city, its population, every human whatsoever, all that are in

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[289] Melville and Melville, "Observations on the Diffusion of Military Technology," 146–49; Duncan J. Melville, "The Mathland Mirror: On Using Mathmatical Texts as Reflections of Everday Life," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 517–26; for a more optimistic view of the practicality of the exercises (suggesting that these documents were copies of earlier texts which were more practical), see Christine Proust, "Les bâtisseurs de remparts avaient-il besoin de mathématiques? Quelques témoignages puisés dans des tablettes mathématiques paléo-babyloniennes provenant de Babylonie du nord," *HiMA* 3 (2016): 249–76.

[290] Melville and Melville, "Observations on the Diffusion of Military Technology," 148.

> this city, by disturbing, overturning, pushing, by revolt, by trickery, by siege, by smooth talk, by undermining, by sheer might, by encircling, by heaping up earth, by causing distress, by (cutting off) food supply, by breaching (the walls), by siege tower, by battering ram, by claw, by ladder, by boring engines, by cutting through the wall, by ramp, by spreading confusion, by causing panic, by the robber's dagger, by hunger, [by] famine, by want, by thirst, [by] soaking in water, by night in the open, [by] as many [tricks] as there are, they will [not] surround [the …] armies that are stationed in the city, will they, [will not] destroy their wall, will not seize their city gate, will not cut off their [escape route], will [not] desecrate their temples, will not everywhere set [fire] to their houses, their [buildings], their property, will not take, rob or carry off [the …] which are in this city, will not take them captives, refugees, prisoners or fugitives, will not bring about their collapse, defeat and overthrow, will not cause noise, dismay? From confusion and panic within this city, will not reduce them to shrieking, will not turn them into a ruin heap, will they? Or, the resident senior man who lives in that city will not go out of his mind, will not lose his reason, will not confer with the enemy army, will not open the bridge of the city gate, and will not send out the troops, the sphere of Marduk and Samsu-ditana, son of Ammi-ṣaduqa, king of Babylon, will not allow the enemy army into the city, will he? Or, any foreign speaker, human with eyes, nose and brow, will not act as an enemy, will not rebel, and will not lay hands on the prefect or district governor or the labour supervisor of this city, will he?[291]

4.5.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian royal inscriptions and letters recount far too many sieges to describe, but this section will examine the more interesting ones.[292] Adad-nirari II recorded that in the fourth of his six campaigns to Ḫanigalbat, a land in northern Mesopotamia that consisted of the remnant of the kingdom of Mitanni, he constructed redoubts (Younger translates this as "siege forts"[293]) around Gidara, a tactic that he claims none had ever used before. Even though they had fortified the city with a moat, the Assyrians still defeated them.[294] Later in his life he performed the same tactic of building redoubts, this time around Nasibina (also in the land Ḫanigalbat), which had dug a new moat for the arrival of the Assyrian king. Along with the redoubts, he also laid traps "as strong as the destructive deluge for him [and] deprived him of grain" (although what these traps consisted of is not described).[295] Assurnasirpal II depicted a variety of sieges in the reliefs at Nimrud.[296] Figure 4.26 shows the Assyrian siege engine protecting Assyrian archers and knocking down the enemy walls while the enemy archers continue to defend themselves (though one might be supplicating for mercy).[297] Another siege shows the defending troops trying to pull on the battering ram with a chain while the Assyrians hold it down with hooks (BM 124554). The same relief appears to depict attempts to light the siege engine on fire with torches, but water is being poured out of the engine to prevent the fire from catching. Two other Assyrian soldiers attempt to knock down the wall with hand tools. Another relief shows an Assyrian soldier cutting a rope that connects a bucket to a pulley in the city, presumably thereby cutting off the city's water supply (fig. 4.27).[298]

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[291] W. G. Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, MC 13 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 27–29; for a brief discussion of the military items mentioned in this text and several other brief texts concerning sieges, see ibid., 144–47.

[292] On sieges in Assyria, see Davide Nadali, "Assyrians to War: Positions, Patterns and Canons in the Tactics of the Assyrian Armies in the VII Century B.C.," *CMAO* 10 (2005): 167–207; Andreas Fuchs, "Über den Wert von Befestigungsanlagen," *ZA* 98 (2008): 45–99; Davide Nadali, "Sieges and Similes of Sieges in the Royal Annals: The Conquest of Damascus by Tiglath-Pileser III," *Kaskal* 6 (2009): 137–49; Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 182–92; Fabrice De Backer, *L'art du siege neo-assyrian*, CHANE 61 (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

Shalmaneser III depicted a series of sieges on the Balawat Gates (fig. 4.28).[299] They are in a style different from the monumental Assyrian reliefs found on walls, with the cities being more stylized and much

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[293] Younger, *Political History of the Arameans*, 237.

[294] RIMA 2:150, A.0.99.2, 49–60; also *ANEHST*, 282–85.

[295] RIMA 2:150–51, 0.99.2, 62–79; also *ANEHST*, 282–85.

[296] However, these reliefs most likely do not depict a catapult (as some have argued); see De Backer, *Art du siege neo-assyrian*, 50–63.

[297] On Assyrian archers in sieges, see Fabrice De Backer, "Les archers de siège néo-assyriens," in Wilhelm, *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power*, 429–48. For research specially on Assyrian siege engines and battering rams, see Tariq Abdul-Waha Madhloum, "Assyrian Siege-Engines," *Sumer* 21 (1965): 9–15; Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 33–35; JoAnn Scurlock, "Assyrian Battering Rams Revisited," *SAAB* 3 (1989): 129–31; Nicolas Gillmann, "Les Tortues Neo-Assyriennes," *Historiae* 8 (2011): 31–64; De Backer, *Art du siege neo-assyrian*, 11–87; De Backer, "Notes sur les machines de siège néo-assyriennes," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 69–86.

[298] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 122–23 (BM 118906).

[299] See a few examples in *ANEP*, 124, 126–27, nos. 359, 362, 365.

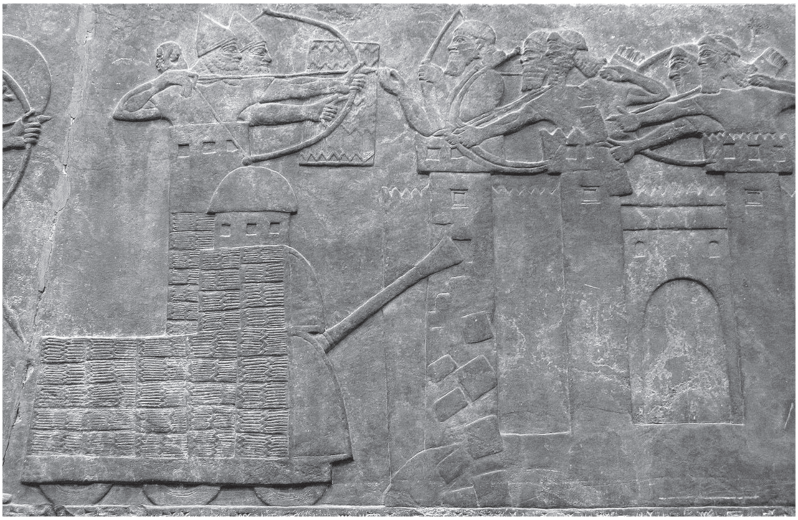

Fig. 4.26. Assyrian siege by Assurnasirpal II. BM 124536; Photo courtesy of Capillon, Wikimedia Commons.

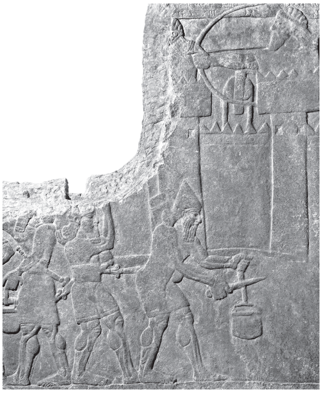

Fig. 4.27. Assyrian soldier cutting a rope. BM 118906. Courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum

smaller compared to the soldiers.[300] Most sieges in the Balawat Gates include a siege ladder going up the side of the city and archers shooting at the defenders. A few of them also include an Assyrian soldier kneeling next to the wall, perhaps engaged in sapping of some kind.[301]

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[300] However, they are very similar in style to the Balawat Gates of Assurnasirpal; see, e.g., Curtis and Tallis, *Balawat Gates of Ashurnasirpal II*, 112–13.

[301] King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 3, band 1; for another example, see *ANEP*, 126, no. 362 (band 4); King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shal-*

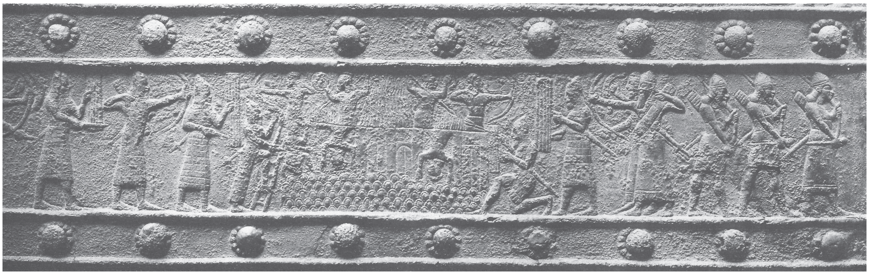

Fig. 4.28. Assyrian siege of Sugunia by Shalmaneser III. Band 1 of the Balawat Gates in British Museum. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 3.

When Sarduri of Urartu rebelled against Tiglath-pileser III, he confined the Urartian king in Turushpa and "inflicted a great defeat upon him before his city gates," apparently meaning that he did not capture the rebel king.[302] A letter to Tiglath-pileser III from Assur-shallimanni, the governor of Arrapha, reported on the successful defeat of Mukin-zer, who had taken the Babylonian throne from Nabu-shumu-ukin II in 731, providing Tiglath-pileser III with an opportunity to conquer Babylon. After isolating him, the Assyrians conquered the city of Babylon and caused Mukin-zeri to flee to his hometown of Sapia. This letter describes the defeat of Sapia and the final fall of Mukin-zeri: "We arrived within the (city) gates and inflicted a defeat: Mukin-zeri has been killed and Šumu-ukin, his son, has also been killed. The city is conquered. The king, my lord, can be glad." However, the governor was also very careful to emphasize that the people of the city were not killed: "Perhaps the king, [my] lord, will say: 'Did they kill (people) within the city?' I swear by the gods of the king, m[y] lord, that they entered only one cubit, one span into the city centre. The king, my lord, may ask about it" (SAA 19.80 = ND 2385). Tiglath-pileser III also recorded a series of sieges in his reliefs.[303] A siege against a Babylonian town shows archers in the besieged city (which might be surrounded by a moat or a lake) as well as Assyrian archers on both sides of the city standing behind large shields

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maneser, pl. 21. For more on sapping in Assyrian siege technique, see De Backer, *Art du siege neo-assyrian*, 127–29.

[302] RINAP 1:98, 39, 20–24.

[303] For one example, see *ANEP*, 129, no. 369; many others can be found in Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*.

to protect them.[304] A particularly busy siege relief from Tiglath-pileser III shows a battering ram, spearmen climbing a ladder to attack the city, Assyrian archers shooting at the defenders (the Assyrian archers are behind large shields), and three impaled defenders.[305] A relief of a siege by Tiglath-pileser III against a Babylonian town (marked by palm trees) provides another example of a siege engine (fig. 4.29).[306]

Sargon II campaigned in Babylon in 710 BCE and defeated the Babylonians, declaring himself king of Babylon. During the campaign, a group of tribes further to the east sought to resist the Assyrian king, but Sargon blocked the river used by the enemy for their defense and built two fortresses as part of his siege to "starve them out" until they surrendered.[307] Sargon II's account of the siege in Dur-Iakin includes several interesting references to siege tactics by the defending Babylonians (though they ultimately proved futile).

> In Dur-Iakin, Merodach-baladan prepared for a siege by taking "a measuring rope from its great wall 200 cubits (about 330 feet); he caused a moat to be dug one and a half nindan (about 30 feet) deep and reached ground water. He cut a channel from the Euphrates and flooded its meadows; the flood plain of the city, the battle zone, he filled with water and broke the bridges."[308]

During Sargon II's campaign in Babylon, the Babylonian king made plans to counterattack. One idea suggested to the Babylonian king (by the Assyrian official Marduk-sharrini who wrote letters to the Assyrian king [SAA 15.187 and 15.188], but was apparently a traitor) was to take the city of Dur-Sharrukku because it was not well provisioned with water (SAA 15.189). However, the Assyrians corrected the problem (SAA 15.156), and the Babylonians did not attack it.[309] One of the very few uses of grappling hooks in attacking a town appears in a relief of Sargon II.[310]

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[304] Drawings from now lost reliefs (except for BM 118904) in ibid., pls. 9–11.

[305] Ibid., pl. 40 (BM 115634 and BM 118903).

[306] Ibid., pl. 34 (BM 118902).

[307] *ARAB* 2:16, §32; also partially quoted in Eph'al, *City Besieged*, 39; see also Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 329.

[308] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 165; see also *ARAB* 2:19, §39; Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 333.

[309] See further Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 105–6.

[310] Albenda, *Palace of Sargon King of Assyria*, pl. 133; De Backer, *Art du siege neo-assyrian*, 92.

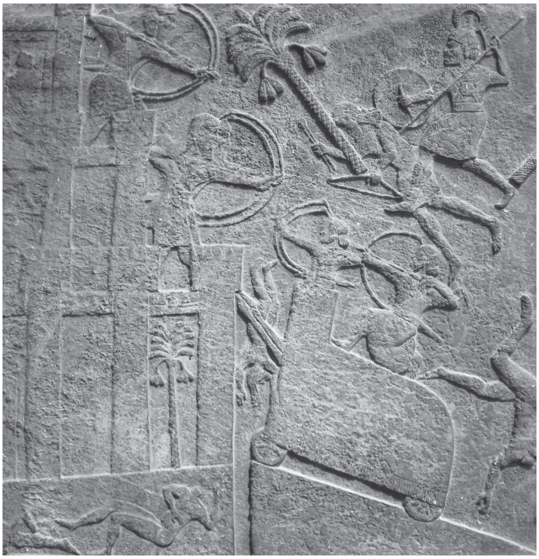

Fig. 4.29. Assyrian siege by Tiglath-pileser III. BM 118902. Photo courtesy of ChrisO, Wikimedia Commons.

The most well-known siege of Sennacherib, the son of Sargon II, was his attack on Hezekiah. In his third campaign (701 BCE), Sennacherib traveled west for the first time to face a rebellion of western kings. After installing a puppet king in Sidon, receiving tribute from several other peoples (including the Ammonites, Moabites, and Edomites), and conquering Ashkelon, he faced an Egyptian army. Their defeat led to the siege of Jerusalem, which he described in more detail than other sieges (even if it was ultimately unsuccessful in capturing Hezekiah). His soldiers conquered the cities "by having ramps trodden down and battering rams brought up, the assault of foot soldiers, sapping, breaching, and siege engines."[311] His relief of the conquest of Lachish is very well-known today and displayed prominently in the British Museum; it includes battering rams (one of the men on the ram is pouring water on it to prevent it from catching fire), many ranks of archers and spearmen, slingers behind the archers, a very strongly defended city, fiery chariots thrown down from the walls to destroy the battering rams, and extensive use of ramps by the attackers.[312] Archaeological study at Lachish has revealed the Assyrian siege ramp there, and a similar ramp has recently been found at nearby Azekah.[313] Sennacherib also recorded many other sieges in his reliefs. In one attack on an unidentified city the Assyrian soldiers are shown climbing a hill to approach the city, while other soldiers were already in the city and had begun killing the inhabitants (fig. 4.30).[314] A long series of reliefs depicts his attack on an unknown city, starting with Assyrian soldiers walking to the battle, many archers attacking the city while hiding behind large shields, infantry preparing to attack, many defenders counter-attacking with bows, and Assyrian soldiers holding heads from the enemy corpses.[315] An attack on a city against a river included many infantry climbing ladders laid against the city walls under protective fire from the archers while the defenders shoot their bows and throw down rocks.[316]

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[311] RINAP 3.1:176, iii.21–23.

As part of his attack of Egypt, Esarhaddon claimed he defeated Memphis (the city of the Pharaoh Taharqa) in half a day with "mines, breaches, and ladders."[317] In his queries to the Sun God, Esarhaddon frequently asked about sieges and listed many of the tactics used to break through the walls of a city. In this query, he asked whether one of his enemies would conquer the city Kishassu.

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[312] For a reconstruction of this battering ram and the siege of Lachish, see Ussishkin, *Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*, 101, 122–24; for more on battering rams in general, see Nick Wernick, "Ancient Near Eastern Battering Rams: Questioning Their Penetrative Power and Target Location," *UF* 47 (2016): 371–414; see also Ussishkin, *Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*, 105; *ANEP*, 129–32, nos. 371–74; Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 322–52, nos. 428–39 (Or.Dr.I.58–62 = BM 124904–124915). For studies of these reliefs, see Ussishkin, *Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*; Christoph Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures—Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," in *"Like a Bird in a Cage": The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe, JSOTSup 363 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2003), 221–305; Nazek Khalid Matty, *Sennacherib's Campaign Against Judah and Jerusalem in 701 B.C.: A Historical Reconstruction*, BZAW 487 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 67–89.

[313] Lachish: Israel Eph'al, "The Assyrian Ramp at Lachish: Military and Lexical Aspects," *TA* 11 (1984): 60–69; Ussishkin, *Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*, 50–54. Azekah: Oded Lipschits, Manfred Oeming, and Yuval Gadot, "Interdisciplinary Research of Assyrian Siege Ramps: The Case of Tel Azekah," *HBAI* 4 (2015): 135–43.

[314] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 54–55, nos. 49–50 (Or.Dr.IV.40; Or.Dr.IV.13).

[315] Ibid., pls. 158–82, nos. 234–46 (Or.Dr.IV.57–58; Or.Dr.I.34 = BM 124784–124787).

[316] Ibid., pl. 273, no. 366 (Or.Dr.I.64).

[317] RINAP 4:98, 185, rev.40–44.

> Will they, be it by means of pressure, or by force, or by waging war, or [by means of a tun]nel or breach, or (scaling) ladders, or by means of ramps or [battering]-rams, or famine, or by a treaty invoking the names of god and god[dess], or through friendliness or peaceful negotiations, or through any ru[se of captu]ring a city, capture the city Kišassu? Will they enter that city, Kišassu? (SAA 4.43)[318]

Esarhaddon had defeated Tyre and drawn up a treaty enforcing the submission of Baʿil, the king of Tyre. However, Baʿil later rebelled against Assyrian rule and in his third campaign Assurbanipal marched to Syria to force him to submit. Since it was an island, direct attack would be impossible, requiring the Assyrian king to focus on supply issues to achieve his victory.

> In my third campaign, I marched against Baʿil, king of Tyre, who lives (on an island) amidst the sea, because he did not heed my royal order, did not listen to my personal commands. I surrounded him with redoubts, seized his communications (lit. roads) on sea and land. I (thus) intercepted (lit. strangled) and made scarce their food supply and forced them to submit to my yoke.[319]

At some point after 646, Assurbanipal attacked the Arabs to the south of the Assyrian kingdom because they had broken a loyalty oath by supporting the Babylonian rebellion of Shamash-shum-ukin. He chased them across the desert until they reached Damascus and then fled to the nearby Mount Hukkurina (probably the area of Jebel Druze and Trachonitis).[320] He defeated the leaders in battle, but forced the rest to surrender by stationing his troops near any sources of water. The Arabs who did not die

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[318] For an "eclectic" query that combines all the terms used in the queries to describe a siege, see Ephʿal, *City Besieged*, 20–21.

[319] *ANET*, 295; see also *ARAB* 2:296, §779; *COS* 4.41:186; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 41–45; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 216; Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 184.

[320] For more on the background to these events, see Israel Ephʿal, *The Ancient Arabs: Nomads on the Borders of the Fertile Crescent Ninth–Fifth Centuries B.C.* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1982), 157–64.

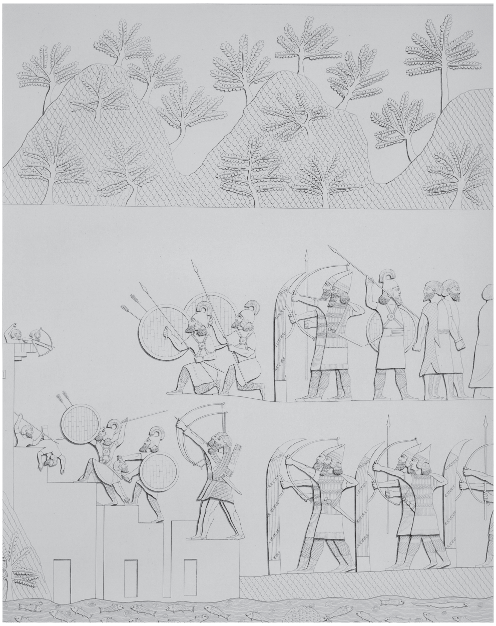

Fig. 4.30. Assyrian siege by Sennacherib. Or.Dr.IV.13. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library Digital Collections.

"slit open camels, their (only) means of transportation, drinking blood and filthy water against their thirst." After the battle, he captured so many camels that he claimed he was able to pass them out to the people of Assyria "as if they be sheep."[321] In another account of his campaign against the Arabs, he emphasized the result of the curses coming upon the Arabs for their transgression of a treaty.

> The rest of the Arabs, who had fled before my weapons, the god Erra, the hero, struck down. Famine broke out among them and in their hunger, they ate the flesh of their children. All the curses, according to what was written in their loyalty oath, the gods Ashur, Sin, Shamash, Bel, Nabu, Ishtar of Nineveh, Ishtar of Arbaʾil, the great gods, my lords, brought upon them.[322]

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[321] *ANET*, 299 (Rassam Cylinder); for other translations, see *ARAB* 2:317–18, §827; *COS* 4.41:194; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 248.

[322] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 187 (Edition B); other translations also in *ARAB* 2:338, §870; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 82–85; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 244. For an example of such a curse in a treaty, see SAA 2.6; *COS* 4.36:162.

Assurbanipal also depicted many sieges in his reliefs. One smaller fort included two men asking for mercy, both with their bows raised above their heads.[323] In another relief an Assyrian soldier engages in what appears to be sapping, attempting to knock down a wall (fig. 4.31).

4.5.5. Later Empires

In Kassite Babylonia, a commander (Nimgirab-[DN]) in Nimrud complained about the order he received to send his five chariots out on a campaign because his land will be looted. Therefore, he requested from the king (identity unknown) that he be able to keep two chariots in the city to defend it against raiders.[324] According to the Synchronistic Chronicles, Nebuchadnezzar I attacked the Assyrians, but when they mobilized their chariots to attack him, he burned his siege machines and retreated.[325]

A family archive of Neo-Babylonian documents was found in Nippur that dates to the time of the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire. Several receipts for the sale of young children come from a time of siege. In one (2 NT 297), in the third year of Sin-shar-ishkun (619?) in Nippur, a father tells another man: "Take my […] daughter Riʾindu [and keep (her) a]live! [She] shall be [your slave]-girl. Give me 6 shekels of silver so that I may ea[t …"[326] The Old Testament records the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar II, including his use of siege works (דיק), most likely a circumvallation set up around the city to prevent anyone from leaving or sending out a sortie (2 Kgs 25:1).[327] The siege lasted from the tenth month of the

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[323] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 208–9, no. 283 (Or.Dr.I.72 = BM 124825).

[324] Juan-Pablo Vita, "The Power of a Pair of War Chariots in the Late Bronze Age: On Letters RS 20.33 (Ugarit), BE 17 33a (Nippur), and EA 197 (Damascus Region)," in Vidal, *Studies on War in the Ancient Near East*, 89–90.

[325] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 178–81.

[326] A. Leo Oppenheim, "Siege Documents from Nippur," *Iraq* 17 (1955): 88; the article also contains several other siege receipts. See also Grant Frame, "A Siege Document from Babylon Dating to 649 BC," *JCS* 51 (1999): 101–6; for more on the legal and economic aspects of life during a siege, see Ephʿal, *City Besieged*, 114–51.

[327] Aren M. Maeir and Shira Gur-Arieh, "Comparative Aspects of the Aramean Siege System at Tell eṣ-Ṣāfi /Gath," in *The Fire Signals of Lachish: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Israel in the Late Bronze Age, Iron Age, and Persian Period in Honor of David Ussishkin*, ed. Israel Finkelstein and Nadav Naʾaman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 231.

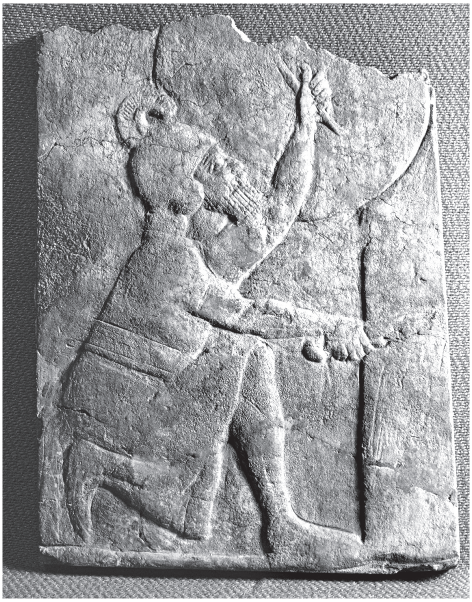

Fig. 4.31. Assyrian soldier during a siege from Assurbanipal. Walters Art Museum 21.6. Photo courtesy of Walters Art Museum, Wikimedia Commons.

ninth year of Zedekiah's reign until the fourth month of the eleventh year (2 Kgs 25:1–3). Interestingly, studies of the fecal matter found in a toilet in the destruction of the city indicate a poor diet, most likely due to the siege.[328] Nabopolassar brought assault towers to Anati but was not successful in conquering the town.[329] Later, the siege of Nineveh took him three months before the Assyrians were defeated.[330] Archaeological evidence from the Halzi gate at Nineveh reveals the trauma of the conquest of the town; skeletons of Assyrians soldiers and children show that they were killed by enemy weapons and by falling debris from the gate.[331]

Herodotus records several examples of Persian sieges.[332] In his siege against Croesus, Cyrus promised a reward to the first soldier to scale the walls, but none were successful except for one man who climbed up a very steep part of the defense that was left unguarded (*Hist.* 1.84). A Persian general (Harpagos) captured cities through earthworks (*Hist.* 1.162). In a famous story, Cyrus captured Babylon by blocking a river and employing the riverbed to enter the city (*Hist.* 1.191).[333] In one anecdote (*Hist.* 4.200), Herodotus describes both how the Persians used tunnels in a siege and how the defenders detected them.

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[328] Jane Cahill et al., "Scientists Examine Remains of Ancient Bathrooms," *BAR* 17/3 (1991): 68.

[329] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 221.

[330] Ibid., 223.

[331] Pickworth, "Excavations at Nineveh," 308–10; the presence of childhood diseases in the skeletons of the children might also suggest that they were suffering the long-term effects of a depressed economy.

[332] For a survey of several Persian sieges, see Duncan B. Campbell, *Besieged: Siege Warfare in the Ancient World* (Oxford: Osprey, 2006), 14–29.

> Then the Persians besieged Barce for nine months, digging underground passages leading to the walls, and making violent assaults. As for the mines, a smith discovered them by the means of a shield coated with bronze, and this is how he found them: carrying the shield round the inner side of the walls he smote it against the ground of the city; all other places where he smote it returned but a dull sound, but where the mines were the bronze of the shield rang clear. Here the Barcaeans made a countermine and slew those Persians who were digging the earth. Thus the mines were discovered, and the assaults were beaten off by the townsmen. (Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.200 [Godley, LCL])

4.5.6. West Semitic

The Amarna letters refer to many sieges, though unfortunately details are not abundant beyond basic tactics like starvation blockades (EA 88). Various first millennium inscriptions refer to sieges in generic terms, such as the Mesha stela, which simply states that Mesha fought against a city and conquered it. Zakkur recounted that the kings besieging him built a siege ramp taller than his walls and dug under the defensive ditch.[334]

The most abundant source of information about sieges comes from the Old Testament; this section will focus on those found in Kings. When Omri besieged Zimri in Tirzah, Zimri committed suicide by burning down the king's house on himself (1 Kgs 16:17–18). Negotiations for the surrender of a city besieged are recorded in 1 Kgs 20:1–12; Ahab submitted to sending gold, silver, and his best children and wives to Ben-Hadad, but he refused to allow the Aramean soldiers to plunder the city themselves. The story also includes a reference to a sortie from the besieged city that routed the besiegers (1 Kgs 20:16–21). Mesha attempted a sortie from Kir-hareseth with seven hundred swordsmen, but was unsuccessful (2 Kgs 3:26). The conquest of Gaza by Hazael (2 Kgs 12:18) might have archaeological evidence in the form of a siege trench built by the Arameans to keep the people of Gaza within the city.[335] A siege of Samaria by Ben-Hadad resulted in great hardship for the people in the city. However, YHWH miraculously intervened shortly afterward and lifted the siege.

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[333] In Xenophon's version of this story, Cyrus also dug a ditch around the city to cut down the number of guards needed (*Cyr.* 7.5.9).

[334] *COS* 2.35:155.

> As the siege continued, famine in Samaria became so great that a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and one-fourth of a kab of dove's dung for five shekels of silver. Now as the king of Israel was walking on the city wall, a woman cried out to him, "Help, my lord king!" He said, "No! Let the LORD help you. How can I help you? From the threshing floor or from the wine press?" But then the king asked her, "What is your complaint?" She answered, "This woman said to me, 'Give up your son; we will eat him today, and we will eat my son tomorrow.' So we cooked my son and ate him. The next day I said to her, 'Give up your son and we will eat him.' But she has hidden her son." (2 Kgs 6:25–29 NRSV)

4.6. Naval Combat

Naval battles were relatively uncommon in the ancient Near East since nations largely interacted over land rather than sea. Boats most often served as a means of transport rather than battle vessels themselves.[336] Several examples of naval battles appear in the historical record, though details are often lacking and the scale of the battles is usually small.

4.6.1. Egyptian

In very early Egypt, the Gebel al-Arak knife handle depicts ships in a battle scene (fig. 4.32), and the Gebel Sheikh Suleiman monument at the Second

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[335] Aren M. Maeir, "Hazael, Birhadad, and the *ḥrṣ*," in *Exploring the Longue Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager*, ed. J. David Schloen (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009), 273–77; Maeir and Gur-Arieh, "Comparative Aspects of the Aramean Siege System"; for a contrary view, see David Ussishkin, "On the So-Called Aramaean 'Siege Trench' in Tell Es-Safi, Ancient Gath," *IEJ* 59 (2009): 137–57.

[336] For more on ships in the ancient Near East, see Fales, "Rivers in Neo-Assyrian Geography," 211–15; Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 130–33; Torgny Säve-Söderbergh, *The Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, Uppsala Universitets Årsskrift 6 (Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1946).

Cataract shows a boat with corpses and prisoners.[337] Although no naval combat scenes remain from the Old Kingdom, aquatic hunting scenes have been preserved.[338] Various tombs also depict a boat tournament in which the sailors of the boats struggle with each other and push each other off their boats (fig. 4.33), perhaps as a part of a contest to be the first to arrive at the tomb and bring provisions for offerings or just as a spontaneous sporting challenge.[339] Weni described a campaign (under Pepy I) in which he brought part of his army to the enemy on rafts and another part remained on land.[340] The location of the battle is most likely the Jezreel Valley, as the gazelle nose refers to the land sticking out of the coast that is today occupied by Haifa. Tefibi was the nomarch (local ruler) of Asyut and fought against the Thebans during the First Intermediate period. He records fighting a naval battle: "I ceased not to fight [to the end making use of the south wind] as well as the north wind, of the east wind as well as [of the west wind]. He fell in the water, his ships ran aground, his army were like bulls."[341]

Due to the importance of the Nile, beginning in the Middle Kingdom Egypt often maintained a naval force for the transportation of troops, especially to the south to acquire gold in Nubia.[342] The navy was the most important part of the Egyptian military in the Middle Kingdom, but this relative ranking switched during the New Kingdom, when battles were more often fought outside of Egypt without easy access to the Nile.[343]

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[337] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 326–27.

[338] Ibid., 366–67.

[339] As a contest: Andrey O. Bolshakov, "The Scene of the Boatmen Jousting in Old Kingdom Tomb Representations," *BSEG* 17 (1993): 29–39. As spontaneous: Decker, *Sport and Games of Ancient Egypt*, 99–103; for several more of the reliefs, see Edward L. B. Terrace and Henry G. Fischer, *Treasures of Egyptian Art from the Cairo Museum* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1970), 61–64; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 3:15.

[340] Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 354–55; for other translations, see *AEL* 1:20; *ANET*, 228; *ARE* 1:144.

[341] *ARE* 1:182–83.

[342] Anthony J. Spalinger, "Warfare in Ancient Egypt," in *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, ed. Daniel C. Snell, BCAW (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), 231; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 451–55; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 380–81.

[343] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 5–6; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 393–97.

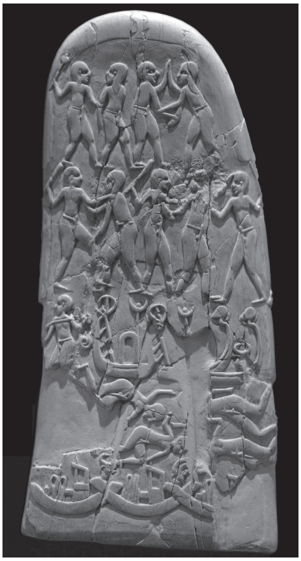

Fig. 4.32. Gebel el-Arak Knife. Louvre E 11517; Photo courtesy of Rama, Wikimedia Commons.

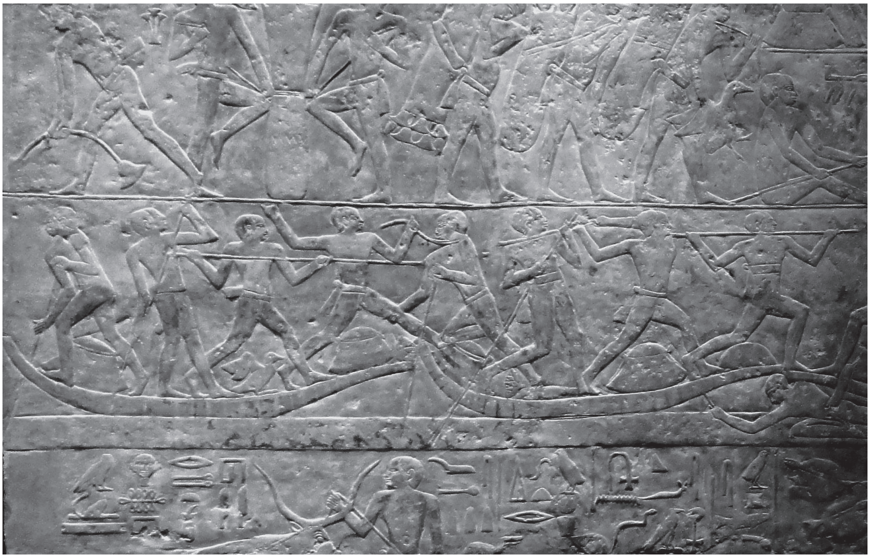

Fig. 4.33. Ny-ankh-nesuwt tomb relief. Early Sixth Dynasty from Saqqara, presently in the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri. Photo courtesy of Daderot, Wikimedia Commons.

However, even in the Middle Kingdom naval battles were rare, as the ships mainly served to transport the troops and did not participate in the battle itself.[344] The reliefs in the tomb of Intef depict boats with soldiers on board ready to fight.[345] Herodotus claimed that Sesostris took his navy south to conquer distant lands (*Hist.* 2.102), but his Egyptian informants most likely misled him.

Different types of ships were needed for travel on the Nile as opposed to sea journeys, requiring different sizes and even different types of wood.[346] Traveling by sea from the Delta to Byblos would have taken about two weeks. The maximum number of troops held in each Nile ship was probably around twenty-five, while an ocean-going vessel perhaps held up to around two hundred.[347] Soldiers were sometimes assigned to be part of a ship's contingent, but they would continue to fight on land (as seen in Ahmose' autobiography).[348] The command structure of the navy is difficult to determine.[349]

In the New Kingdom, Kamose fought against the Hyksos (Asiatic kings who had taken control of Egypt) by employing the navy to bring his troops north on the Nile, though no naval combat is recorded.[350] Several fragments of reliefs by Tutankhamen include large boats in a martial context (such as reliefs that include bound Nubian captives).[351] In the Gebel Barkal stela Thutmose III recounted building boats near Byblos and dragging them overland to the Euphrates.[352] It is also possible that he reached Canaan by boat in some campaigns due to his sudden appearance in Canaan.[353]

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[344] Säve-Söderbergh, *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, 3; for references to these battles, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 452–55.

[345] Schulman, "The Battle Scenes of the Middle Kingdom," 170; for a line drawing, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 454.

[346] For a beautifully illustrated book on Egyptian ships, see Björn Landström, *Ships of the Pharaohs: 4000 Years of Egyptian Shipbuilding* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1970).

[347] For more on all these estimates, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 52–55; Säve-Söderbergh, *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, 78.

[348] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 19–20.

[349] For more on naval officers, see ibid., 56–57; Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 55–56; Säve-Söderbergh, *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, 71–94.

[350] *ANET*, 554–55, for a reconstruction of a relief of the battle, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 22. For more on the battle, see Säve-Söderbergh, *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, 1–4.

[351] Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 239.

[352] *COS* 2.2B:15; for details on this feat, see Gabriel, *Thutmose III*, 163–71.

Ramesses II records several naval expeditions, including an attack by the Sherden (most likely from northern Syria) on Egypt by sea: "The unruly Sherden whom no one had ever known how to combat, they came boldly [sailing] in their warships from the midst of the sea, none being able to withstand them."[354] In an inscription from the Delta, Re-Horakhti promised Ramesses II that he would grant him the islands in the sea: "And the Isles in the midst of the Great Green (Sea), through your victories, by your sword, they being carried off to Egypt."[355] The men holding the title of a marine standard bearer in Ramesses II's navy were apparently significant leaders.[356] One of those men, Khetef, says the following:

> I was leader of the king's army, the first of the ranks. I was announced in the presence of His Person to [consult on] every plan of action (?). I sailed the king in the royal barque, commanding it (?) as the head of his crew. I called out before him, I proclaimed his name, I extolled (?) (his) power in his presence, being favored (on account of it).[357]

Papyrus Harris recounts how Ramesses III gave Amon-Re a fleet in the Mediterranean.

> I made for thee transports, galleys, and barges, with archers equipped with their arms, upon the sea. I gave to them captains of archers and captains of galleys, manned with numerous crews, without number, in order to transport the products of the land of Zahi and the countries of the ends of the earth to thy great treasuries in "Victorious Thebes."[358]

The most famous naval battle in ancient Egyptian history occurred in the reign of Ramesses III, who defended Egypt against the attack of the Sea

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[353] Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 382–83; Gabriel, *Thutmose III*, 143–58.

[354] Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 40–41.

[355] "Central East Delta: Tell el-Maskhuta," *RITA* 2.151:230.

[356] For more on the standard-bearer of a ship, see Säve-Söderbergh, *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, 82–84; for more on the composition of a ship's crew in Egypt, see Schulman, *Military Rank*, 19–20.

[357] Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 195–96.

[358] *ARE* 4:120 (P.Harr.); also Grandet, *Papyrus Harris*, 1:230.

People. He prepared naval defenses: “I caused the Nile mouth(s), to be prepared, like a strong rampart, with warships, (large) vessels and boats, (all) prepared; and they were manned completely, from stern to stern with valiant warriors bearing their weapons.”[359] Ramesses III describes those who entered the Nile as “birds snared in the net, made into a mash (?) […], their arms; and their hearts removed, taken away, no longer in their bodies.”[360] The king fought personally against them on the water.

> His Majesty is gone forth like a storm-wind against them, fighting on the battlefield like a runner. His splendour and the terror of him have entered into their bodies—overturned and destroyed in their place(s). Their hearts are taken away, and their soul(s) flown off, and their weapons scattered over the Great Green (sea). His arrow penetrates who(soever) he wished among them, and the fugitive ends up fallen in the water.[361]
>
> Those who came on together by sea, the full (?) flame was before them, at the Nile Mouths, (while) a stockade of lances surrounded them on the shore—(they were) dragged in, capsized and laid prostrate on the beach, slain and made with heaps, head over heels (“tail to head”); their ships and property were as fallen into the water.[362]

The reliefs of Ramesses III also show this battle fought on boats but with many Egyptians shooting their bows on shore led by their larger than life king (figs. 4.34 and 4.35). In part of the relief, an Egyptian boat rams a boat of the Sea People. The Egyptian archers shoot their bows, a slinger in the crow’s nest is preparing to let loose a stone, and spearmen are preparing to attack. A few of the Sea People are fighting back, but many are fleeing or already dead.[363]

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[359] “Sea Peoples’ Campaign, Medinet Habu: Great Inscription of Year 8,” *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.9:34; also *COS* 4.2:12.

[360] “First Libyan War: Great Inscription of Year 5,” *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.4:22.

[361] “Campaign against the Sea Peoples” Medinet Habu Scenes, Sea Battle and Victory,” in *RITA* 5.7.Ramesses III (27–28).

[362] “Sea Peoples’ Campaign, Medinet Habu: Great Inscription of Year 8,” *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.9:34.

[363] *ANEP*, 114, no 341; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:115–17; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:340–41; Nelson, “Epigraphic Survey of the Great Temple of Medient Habu,” fig. 24; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pl. 37; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 307.

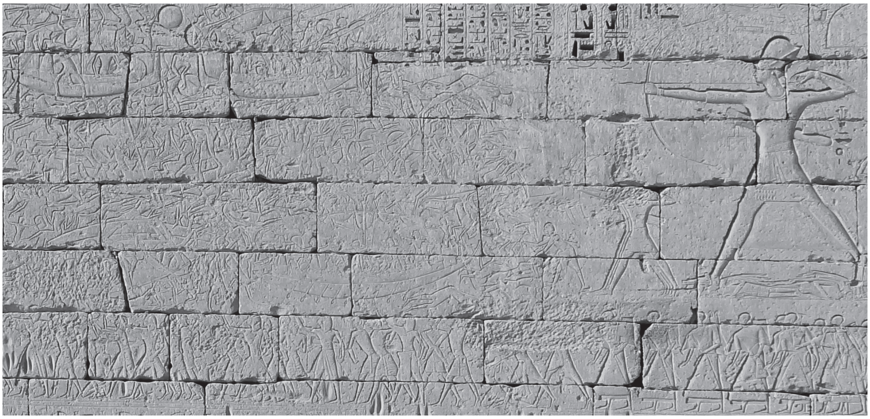

Fig. 4.34. Ramesses III's defeat of the Sea People. Ramesses III's Temple at Medinet Habu. Photo courtesy of Olaf Tausch, Wikimedia Commons.

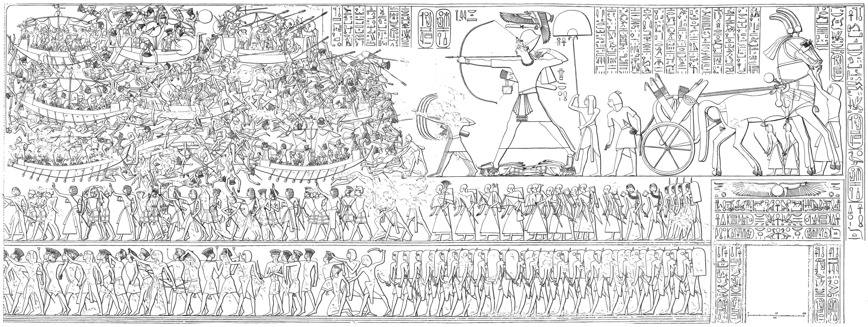

Fig. 4.35. Ramesses III's defeat of the Sea People. Ramesses III's Temple at Medinet Habu. Line drawing from Harold H. Nelson, Medinet Habu 1, pl. 37. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

Later in Egyptian history, Herodotus claimed that Neco built triremes for military purposes (*Hist.* 2.159). Piye fought several naval battles on the Nile against the Libyans. Early in his conquest of Egypt, the king's army fought a sea battle on the Nile and defeated the enemy ships.

> They then went sailing northward and they arrived at Thebes; they did exactly as His Majesty had said. They then went sailing northward on the river, finding that numerous ships had come southward with soldiers, sailors, and troops of every valiant warrior of Lower Egypt equipped with weapons of warfare to fight against the army of His Majesty. Then a great slaughter was made among them, in incalculable numbers. Their

> army and their ships were captured and brought away as captives to the place where His Majesty was.[364]

The king employed ships to conquer the harbor of Memphis, the final battle he faced in his campaign (for another part of this battle, see above, §4.5.1).

> Then he sent his ships and this troops to assault the harbor of Memphis, and they brought away for him every boat, every ferry, every pleasure boat, as many ships as were moored at the harbor of Memphis with prow rope fastened among its houses. [There was not] a common soldier who wept among the entire army of His Majesty. His Majesty himself went to arrange the battle formation of the ships, as many as they were. His Majesty commanded his army:
>
> "Forward against it! Mount the ramparts! Enter the houses atop the river! If one among you enters over the rampart, no one will stand in his way, [...] no troops will repel you. It would be vile, then, that we should seal Upper Egypt, moor at Lower Egypt, and yet sit in siege at "The Balance of the Two Lands."
>
> Then Memphis was taken like a cloudburst, with numerous people slain within it, in addition to those brought as prisoners to the place where His Majesty was.[365]

Amasis, part of the Twenty-Sixth Dynasty, was one of the last pharaohs of Egypt before the Persian conquest. In one battle, the king defeated enemy ships (most likely associated with Apries, the former pharaoh who was trying to regain the throne of Egypt): "Numerous ships took them, falling into the water, whom they saw sink as do the fish."[366]

4.6.2. Hittite

A Hittite navy in the Aegean seems to have been nonexistent, while a navy in the Mediterranean was a late development, helped by their vassals in Syria.[367] Suppiluliuma II, the last Hittite king, describes fighting enemy ships at sea and setting fire to the captive ships. After this success, he landed his troops on Cyprus and defeated the enemy on land. It is likely that the ships were supplied by a Hittite ally, such as Ugarit. "My father […] I mobilized and I, Suppiluliuma, the Great King, immediately [crossed/reached(?)] the sea. The ships of Alašiya met me in the sea three times for battle, and I smote them; and I seized the ships and set fire to them in the sea."[368]

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[364] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 479.
[365] Ibid., 485–86.
[366] *ARE* 4:512.
[367] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 203–11.

4.6.3. Early Mesopotamian

As elsewhere, ships primarily served as a means of transport in early Mesopotamia. Manishtushu, the son of Sargon the Great, crossed the Persian Gulf (perhaps to modern Oman [RIME 2:74]) and conquered thirty-two cities on the other side.[369] In the Mari letters Yarim-Adad described for Zimri-Lim the strategic agreement between Rim-Sin and Hammurabi, who had agreed to support each other in case of attack, apparently using small boats to transport their troops (ARM 26.367). The Babylonian king Hammurabi was unwilling to cede the town of Hit to Mari because it supplied Babylon with supplies for its boats, which were not important to Mari. "Your country's [Mari] power lies in donkeys and chariots. My country's [Babylon] lies in ships. That is exactly why I really want the bitumen and pitch from that city."[370] A visionary text portrays Zimri-Lim returning in triumph on a pair of boats (ARM 10.10 = ARM 26.236 = LAPO 18 1139), perhaps providing a glimpse of boats as a symbol of power.[371]

4.6.4. Assyrian

The Assyrians often used boats for transport, though they occasionally engaged in naval battles. The Middle Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser I rode in the boats of the Phoenicians after defeating a group of western kings, but the only action recorded was the killing of a sea-horse. "I rode in boats of the people of Arvad (and) travelled successfully a distance of three double hours from the city Arvad, an island, to the city Ṣamuru, which is in the land Amurru. I killed at sea a *nāḫiru*, which is called a sea-horse."[372]

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[368] Hans G. Güterbock, "The Hittite Conquest of Cyprus Reconsidered," *JNES* 26 (1967): 78 (*CTH* 121); for another translation, see *COS* 1.75:193.

[369] RIME 2:75–77, E2.1.3.1, 1–19; see also *ANEHST*, 19; for other references to boats in early Mesopotamia, see Marie-Christine de Graeve, *The Ships of the Ancient Near East (C. 2000–500 B.C.)*, OLA 7 (Leuven: Departement Oriëntalistiek, 1981), 15–16.

[370] Van de Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 71 (ARM 26.468 = Sasson 1.6.a.iv.2).

[371] Daniel Bonneterre, "Les deux bateaux du roi Zimri-Lim: Le transport des troupes et la symbolique du pouvoir selon une vision onirique," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 133–47.

When the cities of Nikdeme and Nikdere fled on rafts to the sea, Shalmaneser III chased them and defeated them on an unidentified sea: "I went after them in rafts (made of inflated) goatskins (and) waged a mighty battle in the midst of the sea. I defeated them (and) dyed the sea red like red wool with their blood."[373] After the battle of Qarqar, he went for a boat ride on the Mediterranean Sea: "I boarded boats (and) went out upon the sea."[374] A century later Ashipa, an official in charge of shipping barley during the Mukin-zeri rebellion (731–729), reported to Tiglath-pileser III that in spite of an attack in which several men had died, the boats and rafts were safe (SAA 19.111 = ND 2365). Sargon II conquered Cyprus, though no mention of naval activity is recorded.[375] He also defeated a group of pirates in the Mediterranean: he "caught the Ionians in the middle of the sea as a fowler (does)."[376]

Sennacherib fought several battles near the sea. In his fourth campaign, he journeyed south to Babylon. When Merodach-baladan fled in boats ("flew away like a bird") across the sea, Sennacherib made no effort to chase him, though he did catch many of his men in the swamps.[377] Several years later, during his sixth campaign, the Assyrian king chased a group of Babylonians from the tribe of Bit-Yakin across the Great Sea to Elam in boats of the land of Hatti and apparently defeated the enemy on the shore through an amphibious assault. The boats were built in Nineveh by Phoenician sailors, who also manned the boats. The troops were brought by boat down the Tigris until they reached the Arahtu canal (the closest point between the two rivers), where they crossed to the Euphrates, perhaps because the southern part of the Tigris was still under Elamite control.[378] The king traveled on the land while his warriors moved in the boats, but the tide rose so high that the water surrounded his camp and forced the soldiers to stop moving: "all of my soldiers had to sit curled up as though they were in cages." They eventually reached their destination and attacked. "My warriors reached the quay of the harbor (and) like locusts they swarmed out of the boats onto the shore against them and defeated them."[379]

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[372] RIMA 2:37, A.0.87.3, 16–25.

[373] RIMA 3:22, A.0.102.2, ii.77–78.

[374] RIMA 3:45, A.0.102.8. 19′.

[375] Grant Frame, "The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-I Var," *Or* 68 (1999): 40; for the stela he left on Cyprus, see *ARAB* 2:100–102, §§180–89; Barbara Nevling Porter, "Audiences for the Cyprus Stela of Sargon II," in Lanfranchi, *Leggo!*, 669–75.

[376] Grant Frame, "Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in George, *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions*, 142 (MS 2368); for more on this, see Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 130; Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 120–21.

[377] RINAP 3.1:177, 22, iii.59–74.

In a campaign in Egypt, Assurbanipal captured ships of war when the Pharaoh Taharqa fled in a ship, but he does not include any record that he employed them in battles. He added the ships and armies of his vassals to his armies and sent them further into Egypt.[380] The Assyrian general Bel-ibni, serving under Assurbanipal in Babylon, requested that a group of Sidonians make ships for him (ABL 795 = SLA 38). In another letter (also most likely from Bel-ibni) a general informed Assurbanipal about a raid from across the water.

> Having crossed over against me in small boats, they robbed two clans and (their) dead in my presence; (then) they escaped. Since the god of the king my lord stood by me, I was (enabled) to send their treasures (?) … with four hundred archers, by means of boats. They crossed the Persian Gulf into Elam; under the protection of the king my lord, they made a slaughter among the Hilim (and) the Pillat. After they had butchered five or six hundred of their oxen, they withdrew.[381]

Assyrian reliefs depict various kinds of ships. Tiglath-pileser III included two boats in front of a town, though it does not appear that it is a combat situation.[382] A color painting from Til Barsip depicts a warship carrying soldiers.[383] One ship from the time of Sennacherib is equipped with a ram and carries soldiers on its upper deck (fig. 4.36).[384] A drawing of a now-lost relief also shows a similar Phoenician warship, but this one is complete.[385] A relief from Sennacherib depicted himself fighting Babylonians in the marshes; both soldiers and captives are on board boats among the reeds (smaller boats than the warships).[386] Another relief depicts the battle between them entirely on boats (the Assyrian boats are slightly longer), though Assyrian cavalry are hiding in the marshes to the right side of the relief (fig. 4.37).[387] A relief of Assurbanipal shows Elamites fleeing a besieged town to hide in the marshes.[388] Another Assurbanipal relief shows Assyrian soldiers attacking Babylonians in marshes, including some in boats.[389]

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[378] Walther Hinz, *The Lost World of Elam: Re-Creation of a Vanished Civilization*, trans. Jennifer Barnes (New York: New York University Press, 1973), 148.

[379] RINAP 3.2:83–84, 46, 91–94.

[380] *ARAB* 2:349, §901.

[381] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 40–41 (*ABL* 1000 = *SLA* 42).

[382] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 56–57.

[383] It is currently located in the Aleppo Museum; for a color picture, see Strommenger, *Five Thousand Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 39.

4.6.5. Later Empires

The carpenters who went on campaign with the Babylonian army might have been included to work on ships.[390] According to one chronicle, after Neriglissar's defeat of an enemy in Syria, he went on to defeat a city in the middle of the sea using boats. "With the aid of boats, he took Pitusu, a land in the middle of the Ocean, and the six thousand soldiers, fighters stationed in the town. He destroyed the town and took its inhabitants prisoners."[391] As recorded in the Bisitun Inscription, Darius fought Babylonian rebels led by Nidintu-Bel near the Euphrates, and after the battle the river carried away part of the Babylonian army.[392] According to Herodotus, Darius and other Persian leaders fought several naval battles as part of his western expansion (*Hist.* 5.31–34, 108–109; 6:6–17).

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[384] *ANEP*, 31, no. 106 (BM 124772); Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 134–35, no. 195 (Or.Dr.IV.68).

[385] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 136, no 197 (Or.Dr.IV.68); for another relief of a warship from Sennacherib, see ibid., pl. 38, no. 30 (Or.Dr.IV.7).

[386] Ibid., pls. 234–39, no. 340 (Or.Dr.IV.34 = BM 124774); picture also available in Strommenger, *Five Thousand Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*, pls. 234–35.

[387] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 454, no. 611 (Or.Dr.IV.33).

[388] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 17 (BM 124931).

[389] Ibid., pl. 28 (Or.Dr.VII.15).

[390] MacGinnis, *The Arrows of the Sun*, 91, no. 35 (BM 78828).

[391] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 233; Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, 104.

[392] Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire*, 144 (DB column 1 §19).

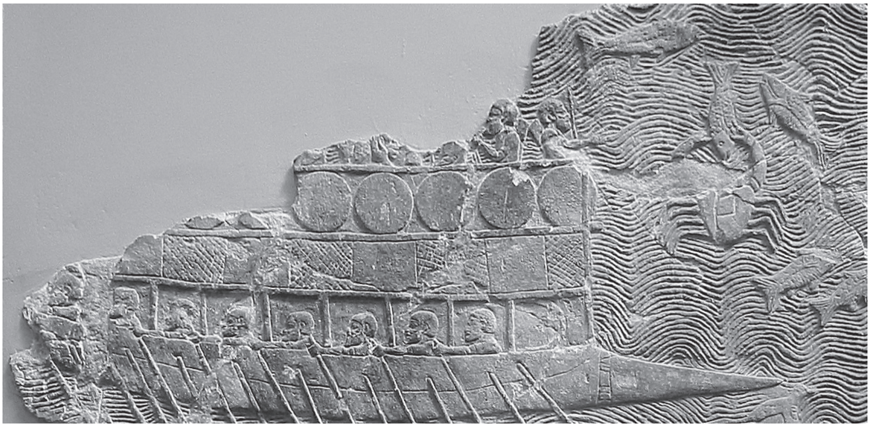

Fig. 4.36. Assyrian warship from Sennacherib. BM 124772. Photo courtesy of World Imaging/Wikimedia Commons.

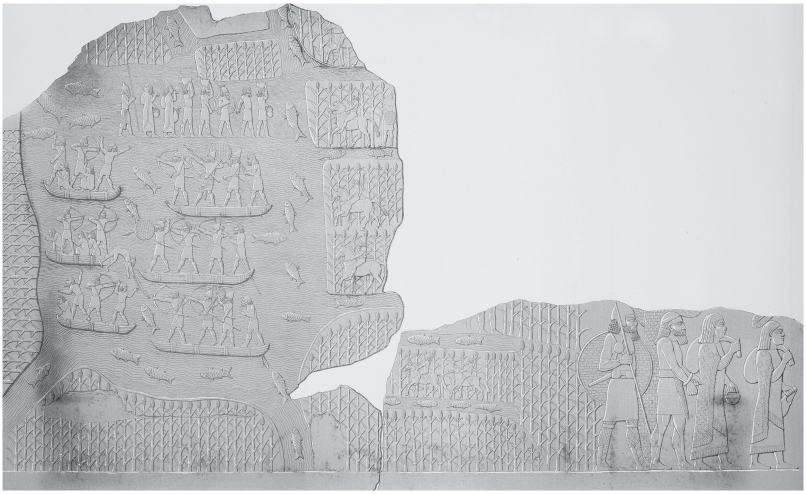

Fig. 4.37. Assyrian marsh battle. Or.Dr.IV.33. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library Digital Collections.

4.6.6. West Semitic

The West Semitic world frequently refers to naval combat, leading several scholars to study the subject from the perspective of piracy.[393] The king of Alashiya (Cyprus) informed Akhenaten in EA 38 that men of Lukki were taking his villages every year. Since Lukki was located somewhere in western Asia Minor, this must have involved sea power in some way. Rib-Hadda, the king of Gubla (Byblos), wrote often to Pharaoh Akhenaten about how he could not go to his ally Sumur because he would be blockaded in the town by enemy ships on one side and an enemy army on land on the other side (EA 104). In another letter, he complained about the ships of Arwada (a coastal town north of Tyre and Sidon) attacking him (EA 101). Torgny Säve-Söderbergh argues that the defection of Aziru to the Hittites away from Egypt spelled the beginning of the end of Egyptian sea power in the eastern Mediterranean, and later pharaohs were forced to move primarily by land in the Levant.[394]

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[393] 393. Amir Gilan, "Pirates of the Mediterranean—A View from the Bronze Age,"

Idrimi, the king of Alalakh, built boats to transport his soldiers.[395] Ammurapi, the last king of Ugarit, wrote a desperate call for help to the king of Alashiya (Cyprus) because of the attacks from the seas from seven ships of the enemy and the absence of his own troops and ships elsewhere (RS 18.147). This signaled the coming of the Sea People and the fall of both the Hittite Empire and the city of Ugarit. When he asked the king of Carchemish for help, the reply was merely a call to stand firm (RSL 1). Unfortunately for the Ugaritic king, a later letter informed the king of the bad news that the ships of Ugarit had joined the enemy (RS 20.18).[396]

The Israelites appear to be reticent to employ ships (the most famous story about a ship in the Old Testament is Jonah's short duration on one). Partly this was due to a lack of natural harbors on the coast of Israel (Herod later was forced to build an artificial harbor at Caesarea). Solomon built ships at Eilat on the Red Sea, but they were manned by Phoenicians and appear to be used only for trade (1 Kgs 9:26–28). Jehoshaphat attempted the same feat, but his ships were wrecked (1 Kgs 22:48). No naval warfare is recorded in the Old Testament.

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in *Seeraub im Mittelmeerraum: Piraterie, Korsarentum und maritime Gewalt von der Antike bis zur Neuzeit*, ed. Nicholas Jaspert and Sebastian Kolditz, Mittelmeerstudien 3 (Paderborn: Fink, 2013), 51–56; Louise A. Hitchcock and Aren M. Maeir, "A Pirates' Life for Me: The Maritime Culture of the Sea People," *PEQ* 48 (2016): 245–64.

[394] Säve-Söderbergh, *Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty*, 69–70.

[395] *COS* 1.148:479.

[396] Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 333 (RS 18.147); for the full text of RS 20.18 and RSL 1, see Zipora Cochavi-Rainey, *The Alashia Texts from the Fourteenth and Thirteenth Centuries BCE: A Textual and Linguistic Study*, AOAT 289 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2003), 43–49.

4.7. Single Combat

Single combat was relatively rare in the ancient Near East. Although a few references to it occur in mythological material (including Enuma Elish and the Baal Cycle), other examples are quite limited.[397] We can differentiate two kinds of single combat: a champion battle involving two champions fighting on behalf of a greater army and a duel as a resolution of a personal struggle. A few accounts sound like champion battles because of the emphasis on the sole role of the king in battle.[398] For example, Naram-Sin describes a battle against Kish in terms of a champion battle: "In the field of the god Sîn the two of them [Naram-Sin and the king of Kiš] engaged in battle and grappled with each other. By the verdict of the goddess Aštar-Annunītum, Narām-Sîn, the mighty, [was vic]tortious over the Kišite in battle at TiWa."[399] In the Hittite Apology of Hattusili III, during the reign of his brother Muwattalli II, Hattusili III repulsed the Kaska tribes: "At that time I personally conquered the enemy. For when I slew the man who was the *piran huyanza,* the (rest of the) enemy fled."[400] The term *piran huyanza* means "one who runs in front," which might indicate that the Hittite general (later to become a king) fought as a champion against the enemy champion. The Egyptian pharaohs often portrayed themselves fighting in single combat against the enemy (fig. 4.38), but this seems to be largely rhetorical based on the strong parallels with the smiting scene (to be discussed in §5.5.1).[401]

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[397] On single combat in the ancient Near East, see Vidal, "Ugarit at War (2)," 707–12; Hans Goedicke, "Sinuhe's Duel," *JARCE* 21 (1984): 197–201; for an account of a modern champion battle, see Roland de Vaux, "Single Combat in the Old Testament," in *The Bible and the Ancient Near East*, trans. Damian McHugh (New York: Doubleday, 1971), 129.

[398] Although many accounts describe a king fighting by himself against the enemy, they usually portray him fighting a large group of enemies rather than a single enemy.

[399] RIME 2:104–5, 2.1.4.6, i.10′–ii.22′.

[400] Harry A. Hoffner Jr., "A Hittite Analogue to the David and Goliath Contest of Champions?," *CBQ* 30 (1968): 222 (*CTH* 81); for another translation, see *COS* 1.77:201.

[401] For a list of examples, see Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 69; for an example from Seti I, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:50; Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 29; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 348.

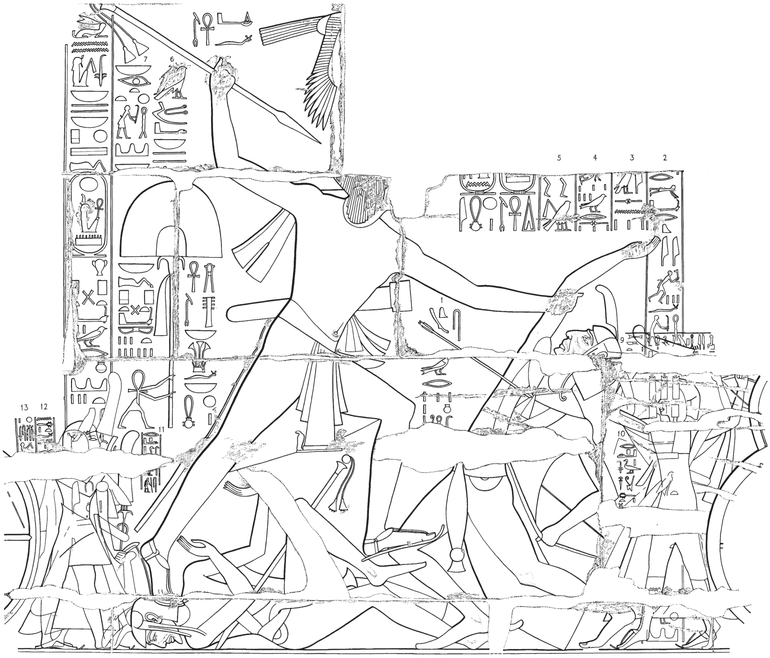

Fig. 4.38. Seti I attacking a Libyan. Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 29. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

One of the few examples of single combat in the ancient Near East is found in the tale of Sinuhe, set in the Middle Kingdom. Sinuhe was a royal official who fled Egypt when Amenemhet I was killed. He married a woman from Canaan when he impressed a chief of Retenu (Canaan). However, after his fame grew a hero came to challenge him, and they entered into a duel. Although the story has many parallels to the David and Goliath story, it represents a duel rather than a champion battle.

> At night I strung my bow, sorted my arrows, practiced with my dagger, polished my weapons. When it dawned Retenu came. It had assembled its tribes; it had gathered its neighboring peoples; it was intent on this combat.
>
> He came toward me while I waited, having placed myself near him. Every heart burned for me; the women jabbered. All hearts ached for me thinking: “Is there another champion who could fight him?” He [raised] his battle-axe and shield, while his armful of missiles fell toward me. When I had made his weapons attack me, I let his arrows pass me by without effect, one following the other. Then, when he charged me, I shot

> him, my arrow sticking in his neck. He screamed; he fell on his nose; I slew him with his axe. I raised my war cry over his back, while every Asiatic shouted. I gave praise to Mont, while his people mourned him. The ruler Ammunenshi took me in his arms.[402]

Although Kings does not contain any single combat, a few examples of single combat can be found elsewhere. The most famous example is the contest between David and Goliath (1 Sam 17). Abner and Joab met in battle at Gibeon and attempted to resolve it through combat between twelve men on each side; however, the men killed each other and a full-scale battle began (2 Sam 2:12–17).

4.8. Deception in Warfare

> Now war is based on deception. Move when it is advantageous and create changes in the situation by dispersal and concentration of forces.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 7.12

Although most ancient Near Eastern empires claimed to scorn it, the use of deceit in battle can be found throughout the ancient Near East.[403] It appears that the empires were more likely to employ deceit in a siege, perhaps because the very act of hiding in a city rather than fighting in the open could be considered cowardly. The deceitful methods described here include such tactics as ambushes and night attacks.[404] Although deceit often plays a role, Seth Richardson notes that, "what appears not all in the record are the kinds of deliberate violations of military norms and customs we associate with modern terror, such as kidnapping, attack under flag of truce, or the disguise of military forces as civilians."[405]

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[402] *AEL* 1:228; for other translations, see *ANET*, 19–20; *COS* 1.38:79.

[403] For the argument that deception was more accepted by the empires than is usually thought, see Colleen Manassa, *Imagining the Past: Historical Fiction in New Kingdom Egypt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 94–98.

[404] For more on ambushes in the ancient Near East, see A. Kirk Grayson, "Ambush and Animal Pit in Akkadian," in *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim, June 7, 1964*, ed. Robert D. Biggs and John A. Brinkman (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1964), 90–94.

[405] Seth F. C. Richardson, "Insurgency and Terrorism in Mesopotamia," in Howe, *Brill's Companion to Insurgency and Terrorism*, 47.

4.8.1. Egyptian

The clearest condemnations of deception in battle can be found in Egyptian literature. Merikare, a Herakleopolitan king during the First Intermediate period who fought the Thebans in the south, purportedly received a set of instructions from his father. The text speaks negatively of the guerrilla tactics of the Asiatics: "He does not dwell in one place, Food propels his legs, He fights since the time of Horus, Not conquering or being conquered, He does not announce the day of combat, Like a thief who darts about a group."[406]

However, other texts portray Egyptians using deceit in battle. The end of the Eleventh Dynasty saw a civil war, out of which the vizier Amenemhat I arose victorious and began the Twelfth Dynasty. An inscription by Nesu-Montu, one of Amenemhet's generals, discusses the training he put his troops through, including practice in ambushes. "The conscripts of Thebes adore me, as I never made display of cruelty [in disciplinary punishment].… I am the only one worthy to be called the hero of this land, swift of hand and quick of pace, a citizen skilled in arms. I trained the troops in ambush, and at daybreak, the landing-stage [of the city] surrendered."[407] Deception also played an important role in battles in the New Kingdom. Thoth, a general under Thutmose III, took the city of Joppa (on the coast of Canaan) through deception (however, the story is most likely fictional and was not included in the royal annals).[408]

> And he had the *two hundred baskets* brought which he had made, and he had two hundred soldiers get down into them. And their arms were filled (with) bonds and fetters, and they were sealed up with seals. And they were given their sandals, as well as their *carrying-poles* and *staves*. And they had every good soldier carrying them, totaling five hundred men. And they were told: "When you enter the city, you are to let out your companions and lay hold on all the people who are in the city and put them in bonds *immediately*.

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[406] *AEL* 1:103–4; aee other translations in *COS* 1.35:64; *ANET*, 414–18.

[407] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 393; Hamblin includes this translation from Lawrence Michael Berman, "Amenemhet I" (PhD diss., Yale University, 1985), 108.

[408] For an extensive study of the text, see Manassa, *Imagining the Past*, 66–101.

> And they went to tell the charioteer of the Enemy of Joppa: “Thus speaks your lord: ‘Go and tell your mistress: “Rejoice for Seth has given us Thoth, along with his wife and his children! See the *vanguard* of their tribute.” (You) shall tell her about these two hundred *baskets*,’” which were filled with men with fetters and bonds.
>
> Then he went ahead of them to bring the good news to his mistress, saying: “We have captured Thoth!” And they opened the locks of the city before the soldiers. And they entered the city [and] let out their companions. And they laid hold [on the] city, small and great, and put them in bonds and fetters *immediately*. So the mighty arm of Pharaoh—life, health, prosperity!—captured the city.[409]

Amenhotep II detected a surprise attack in Syria immediately after crossing the Orontes River and defeated them without any help from his army: “Then his Majesty turned about to view the rearguard of his army, when he saw some Asiatics coming creeping, equipped with weapons of war to attack the army of the king.”[410] At the battle of Qadesh (as recorded in the Poem), the Hittite king Muwattalli enacted a surprise attack against Ramesses II.[411] “Then they came forth from the south side of Qadesh and attacked the army of Pre in the its middle, as they were marching unaware and not prepared to fight. Then the infantry and chariotry of his majesty weakened before them, while his majesty was stationed to the north of the town of Qadesh, on the west bank of the Orontes.”[412] The author of P.Anast. 1, describing the terrible life of the chariotry, includes a story about Asiatics infiltrating the camp during the night and stealing equipment. He also recounted how Asiatics would wait in ambush in a narrow pass.[413]

Later in the Third Intermediate period, Piye very carefully instructed his generals not to employ guerrilla tactics near the beginning of his military conquest of Egypt. The rationale for this decision was most likely his desire to avoid lengthy sieges by fighting a decisive battle in the open field.[414]

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[409] *ANET*, 23; see also “The Capture of Joppa,” translated by Edward F. Wente Jr. in Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 73–74.

[410] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 30 (Memphis/Karnak Stela); also *COS* 2.3:20; *ANET*, 245.

[411] For speculation about the exact mechanics on the battle and how he achieved this surprise, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 212–14.

[412] *AEL* 2:64; for other translations, see *COS* 2.5A:34; *RITA* 2.3A:5.

[413] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 107–8.

[414] For a discussion of this text, see Dan’el Kahn, “Piankhy’s Instructions to His Army in Kush and Their Execution,” in Cogan, *Treasures on Camels’ Humps*, 121–34.

Then His Majesty sent an army to Egypt, charging them forcefully:

> "Do not attack at night in the manner of a game. You should fight when there is sight. Announce battle to him from afar! If he should say: 'Wait for the troops and cavalry of another city,' then may you sit until his army comes. Fight when he says. If, further, his supporters are in another city, let one wait for them. The counts, those whom he has brought to support him, and the trusted Libyan troops, let one announce battle to them in advance, saying:
>
> 'O you whom we do not know how to address in mustering the troops! Yoke the best steeds of your stable! Line up in battle formation! Be informed that Amon is the god who sent us!'"[415]

4.8.2. Hittite

Anitta, a king in central Anatolia in the centuries before the rise of the Old Kingdom of the Hittites, described how he took Nesa and Hattusa by night (§2 and §11). After their defeat, he also captured Salatiwara by a rear attack (§§17–18).[416] Later in the New Kingdom of the Hittites, Tudhaliya engaged a coalition of anti-Hittite nations in the west (in the land of Arzawa) and defeated them in a night battle.[417] However, Tudhaliya's general Kisnapili was killed in an ambush by the rebellious Hittite vassal Madduwatta.[418] A few decades later Mursili II recounts in the Deeds of Suppiluliuma how his father Suppiluliuma faced a night attack from the Kaska and won several battles through ambushes, including the example below.[419]

> Again [my] fa[ther] set out from [Šamuḫa]. And [in the land (?) of …] which had been laid waste by i[ts] enemy, there stood the a[rmy(?)] of the enemy. [(Even) the …] and the shepherds [had come to] help. [My father] laid an ambush [for them] and [attacked] the Ka[ška men.] [He also attacked] the auxiliaries who had come, (so that) the Kaška troops

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[415] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 479.

[416] *ANEHST*, 217–18; *COS* 1.72:182–84 (*CTH* 1.A).

[417] Bryce, *The Kingdom of the Hittites*, 125 (*CTH* 142); for another night attack in early Hittite literature, see Bryce, *Major Historical Texts of Early Hittite History*, 53–54 (*CTH* 4).

[418] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 156–57 (*CTH* 147); for historical context, see Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 133–34.

[419] *COS* 1.74:189 (*CTH* 40); *ANEHST*, 236.

> and the au[xiliary] troops [suffered many casualties]. But the captives whom [he took were beyond counting].[420]

4.8.3. Early Mesopotamian

According to the Chronicle of Early Kings, in the third millennium Sargon the Great defeated an enemy with an ambush: "Later yet, Subartu rose in all its power and forced him to take up arms. Sargon took it by surprise, inflicted a defeat on it, annihilated it, slew its very large army, and brought its wealth into Akkade."[421] After the fall of Sargon's dynasty to the Gutian kings from the highlands, several cities remained independent but weak. Utu-hegal ruled the city of Uruk and was able to defeat the Gutians through a trap.[422]

Deception in battle appears often in the Mari letters.[423] Ibal-pi-El sent a letter to the king about an attempted ambush by Hammurabi, quoting the Babylonian king: "When a large detachment went to ambush an enemy expedition, they could not find a suitable place to lie in wait, so that detachment returned without success, and the enemy expedition continued unchecked—it was not ambushed. Now, let a small detachment go and ambush the enemy expedition, and let them take informers."[424] In another case an elder of Talhayum informed Zimri-Lim that a city was taken at night while the city was at peace (A.2417 = LAPO 17.607 = Sasson 1.1.e.ii). Yaqqim-Addu wrote to Zimri-Lim about the siege at Razama. Atamrum had attempted to dishearten the city (which was expecting help from Zimri-Lim soon) by dressing up some of his men as those of Zimri-Lim. However, the people recognized what he had done and his ruse did not work.

> [This] is what Atamrum staged: He supplied bronze javelins to 30 imposters, and they hassled the city, (saying), "What do you keep invoking the name of Zimri-Lim? Do not his troops besiege you right now?" And the townspeople answered them as follows: "You (Atamrum) equipped

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[420] *COS* 1.74:186 (*CTH* 40).

[421] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 271.

[422] RIME 2:286, E2.13.6.4, 90–100.

[423] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 43–44.

[424] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 150 (ARM 2.22 = LAPO 17.585 = Sasson 3.4.b.ii); also Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 473–74.

> imposters and let them approach. Yes, in 5 days, the troops who are with Zimri-Lim will arrive for you. You will see."[425]

Yanuh-Samar was a servant of the king of Apum (Tell Leilan was the capital); in one letter he reported to Zimri-Lim that an ambush of an enemy troop had turned out spectacularly successful: everyone captured a prisoner of war and no one died: "As the Kahateans took the road to Kahat, 1 hundred troops of Išhi-Addu and 1 hundred 50 troops of [Huziran], 2 hundred 50 troops were dispatched with Išhi-Addu at [their] head, (with the order), 'Go! Lay an ambush for the [Kahatean] troops toward Pardu.'"[426] In another letter that recounts the same campaign, Huziri reported to Zimri-Lim that he had faced an enemy that set up ambushes against him, but he had cleared out the ambush troops when he was informed about it by a deserter (FM 2 127 = A.47 = Sasson 3.4.b.iii). In a letter to his brother, Ishme-Dagan wrote how he planned to deceive an enemy that had rebelled by following Eshnunna.

> When I arrived in Ekallatum, I heard that the city Harbu rebelled and went over to Eshnunna. I have decided to send an army, but there are no boats to carry it across the river at Yabliya. As soon as you receive this tablet send twenty boats with a capacity of one hundred [soldiers] each to Yabliya. If you send empty boats the matter will not remain unnoticed and a spy will warn the enemy. So, ship 1,000 homers of grain, with 100 homers of flour and 10 of beer, at a rate of 50 homers grain per boat, and send them downstream. When you give your orders about these boats, do not mention the numbers of soldiers. When you give orders, give these: "We are sending a convoy with grain rations for the inhabitants of Yabliya, flour and beer mixtures for the citadel of Yabliya."[427]

4.8.4. Assyrian

In one of the few descriptions of an ambush by an Assyrian king in the royal annals, Assurnasirpal II recorded that he defeated the troops of Ameka through an ambush: "While I remained before the city Parsindu I set the cavalry (and) light troops in ambush (and) killed 50 of the combat troops of Ameka in the plain."[428] In his eighth campaign, Sargon II conquered various Urartian cities including Uaiais, an Urartian city just south of Lake Urmia. Sargon II captured it from the rear, though he does not give any details about what that means.[429] On the return trip home from this campaign, Urzana of the city Musasir did not bring him a gift, angering Sargon II and providing him with a pretense to attack the city. He sent the majority of his troops on the road home to Assyria, but took a hand-chosen group through a difficult mountain pass and surprised the city.[430] The governor of Tushhan (on the northern border of Assyria) wrote to Sargon II to describe an ambush of several of his troops.[431]

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[425] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 497 (ARM 14.104^{+} = LAPO 17.548 = Sasson 3.5.b.ii).

[426] Ibid., 315 (ARM 26.357 = Sasson 3.4.b.iii.note); ARM 26.358 also refers to ambushes.

[427] Van de Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 8 (ARM 4.81 = LAPO 17.539).

> I sent two eunuchs of mine with six soldiers and a seal(ed order) for the deserters in Penzâ; they went off with two cohort commanders and had the men brought down. They had dinner there; the brother of the Šubrian (king) too dined with them there. They set out together and were on their way home, when the Šubrians attacked them from an ambush and captured my two eunuchs and the six soldiers. Both of my cohort commanders escaped. I wrote him: "Release the soldiers!" but he said: "I will inquire (into the matter); [i]f they are in my country, I shall give them back." I [se]t out on their trail personally, but they had (already) taken the soldiers up to his fort. (SAA 5.32)

A letter to Sargon II described the plan by citizens of the city of Darati who did not support the Babylonian Merodach-Baladan to build a tunnel, allowing access to the Assyrian army to enter. In contrast to other cities that surrendered *en masse* to the Assyrian, this plot illustrates the divided opinion of the city.[432]

> Sapiku, Aqaba, La-baši, Zaqiru, and Bel-leʾi, a total of five men from Darati, have spoken thus:

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[428] RIMA 2:206–7, A.0.101.1, ii.70–71.

[429] *COS* 4.42:210; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 806.

[430] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 807–8; see discussion in Fuchs, "Assyria at War," 392–93.

[431] For more on this event, see Grayson, "Ambush and Animal Pit in Akkadian," 90.

[432] For more on this episode, see Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 102–4; for another letter describing an offer to hand over a city, see SAA 15.131.

> "We bear the responsibility for Darati. We shall bring Saʾeru and whatever men are loyal to him into the city by means of tunnels, capture Darati and give it to Marduk-šarru-uṣur. Let them work on the houses. At a house which *lends itself to* the work we will cut a tunnel inside, and we shall bring in the men through it. They should work on (the houses of) Eriba and Sîn-duru-uṣur.
>
> After one of them has *by studied words* entered Darati, we shall bring the men in through the tunnels and capture the city. *As to* one of them who *lends himself to* the work, he should go and enter Darati. Let Marduk-šarru-uṣur come at late night and surround the *wing* of Atâ."
>
> He says there are no men who are not loyal to Saʾeru in Sapiku's house. He says Merodach-Baladan will not come to their help. (SAA 15.199)

Ahsheri, the king of Mannaea, made an anti-Assyrian alliance with the Scythians while Assurbanipal reigned in Assyria. When the Assyrian king advanced into his country, the Manean king sent his troops by night to attack him. The Assyrian king did not condemn the night attack, but was still victorious: "During the night stealthily they advanced to give battle, to engage my troops. The soldiers of my battle array fought with them, accomplished their defeat."[433] A letter by the Assyrian general Bel-ibni to Assurbanipal describes an ambush set by Elamite troops when an Assyrian force invaded Elamite land. However, when the Assyrians detected the ambush they took a different route and defeated the Elamites.

> When I sent 150 (men) against the districts of Akbanu and Ale, on the opposite bank of the river Takkatap, they killed many soldiers there and took 130 prisoners. They burned down Akbanu and Ale. But when Amurru-zera-ibni, Yadadanu, Bihayatu, the son of Mahiranu, sheikh of the Halat-people, as well as Laqe, son of Hallallaʾ and their troops, 400 bows altogether, figured out the route of the servants of the king, my lord, they took a position behind the river Nahal to ambush the servants of the king, my lord. The servants of the king, my lord, therefore took another road and made use of a ford 3000 cubits upstream of them. Here they accomplished the crossing of the river until (all of them) had reached the other side. Afterwards they went straight for them. When the servants of the king, my lord, realized the great numbers of the soldiers downstream

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[433] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 51; for other translations, see *ARAB* 2:326–27, §851; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 220.

> of them, and since they would have their hands full (once the fighting had begun), they killed all the prisoners they had taken. And they said to each other: ‘We are 14 double-miles from the Sealand! If we have to die, let us die with an honorable reputation!’ Since the gods of the king, my lord, stood by his servants, they killed 17 soldiers of them and hit 60 or 70 more (before) they (i.e., the enemy soldiers) fled. Among the servants of the king, my lord, only 20 soldiers have been hit.[434]

4.8.5. Later Empires

A chronicle recording the third year of the Babylonian king Neriglissar includes an account of his enemy Appuashu in Syria attempting to defeat him with an ambush: “Before his (arrival), App[u]ašu posted the troops and mounted couriers that he had brought together in an ambush in a pass. Neriglissar overtook them and defeated th[em].”[435]

According to Herodotus (*Hist.* 1.211), Cyrus enacted a surprise attack on the Massagetaian army in which they left behind a weaker part of the army to be defeated and allowed the enemy to eat a feast left for them. When they ate the feast and fell asleep, Cyrus attacked and defeated them.[436] Herodotus reported that the Scythians refused to fight open-field battles because “we Scythians have no towns or planted lands, that we might meet you the sooner in battle, fearing lest the one be taken or the other be wasted” (Herodotus, *Hist.* 4.127 [Godley, LCL]).[437]

4.8.6. West Semitic

A general from Ugarit reported (most likely to the Hittite king Suppiluliuma) that his men were repeatedly attacked in the night. “My men were attacked over and over again in the middle of the night, and a battle was waged between them. My men drove them out, and heaped up their equipment and their property. It was within the fortress (itself) that they were fighting.”[438] The Suteans who were responsible for the killing of a man and the kidnapping of three others for the Egyptians (EA 122–123) were most likely experts in guerrilla warfare.[439] The Old Testament records many night attacks (Gen 14:13–16), such as the Aramean king surrounding Dothan at night (2 Kgs 6:14).[440] Jehoram attacked Edom at night, but was not successful (2 Kgs 8:21). One of the more vicious deceptions recorded in the Old Testament is the attack on Shechem by Simeon and Levi after the men of Shechem had undergone circumcision (Gen 34). The second attack on Ai also involves Joshua's deception of the people of Ai when the Israelites pretended to flee (Josh 8).

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[434] Fuchs, “Assyria at War,” 383–84 (*ABL* 520 = *SLA* 43).

[435] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 233.

[436] For other examples of Persian deception in battle, see Herodotus *Hist.* 3.155–159; 4.201.

[437] See also Herodotus *Hist.* 4.46 on this military strategy.

[438] Bryce, *Letters of the Great Kings of the Ancient Near East*, 182 (RS 20.33); see also Izreʾel and Singer, *General’s Letter from Ugarit*, 25.

4.9. Kings and Princes in Battle

> If you lead in person they will follow.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 4

Kings and princes often claimed that they fought personally in battle, though these claims might be more ideological than a reflection of actual practice.[441] In order to be worthy to be the king, across the ancient Near East it was required that they be strong warriors. Hunting also played an important role for the king because it demonstrated that they could bring order to the natural world through defeating wild animals that would threaten the herds.[442]

4.9.1. Egyptian

The pharaohs of the Old and Middle Kingdom appear to have avoided combat themselves, as illustrated by such texts as Weni, who was sent by pharaoh to lead the troops.[443] However, the mummy of Seqenenre-Tao of the Seventeenth Dynasty appears to have been killed in battle by an axe (see fig 7.2).[444] Starting with the New Kingdom, Egyptian pharaohs portrayed themselves as passionate about engaging in warfare. Seti I expressed his excitement to the news that the Shasu were rebelling against him. "His Majesty—may he live, prosper and be healthy!—was happy at this. For, as for the Good God, he rejoices at engaging in battle, and he enjoys a transgression against him. His heart is satisfied with seeing blood when he chops off the heads of disaffected persons. He loves a moment of pounding more than a day of celebrating!"[445] A variety of poetic texts praise the pharaoh for his martial ability. One example comes from Sinuhe's praise of Sesostris I. "He is far-striding, shooting fugitives—no help is there for one who turns the back to him. Steadfast at the moment of assault, he faces forward, never turns *his* back. Stouthearted he observes the multitudes, allows no stragglers in his neighborhood; Bold to fall on easterners, impatient to despoil the foreigners."[446] A hymn to Senusert III (Twelfth Dynasty) sounds a similar note. "Uniting the Two Lands through his mighty arm, [subduing] the foreign lands by his own hand; Who can slaughter bowmen without drawing the bowstring."[447]

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[439] Vidal, "Sutean Warfare in the Amarna Letters"; Younger, *Political History of the Arameans*, 93.

[440] As can be seen in the previous sections, night attacks were not unique to Israel, disproving the argument in Y. Ben-Yasher, "Night Warfare" [Hebrew], *BM* 17 (1971): 362–64.

[441] This is not just due to fear or self-preservation, but also for tactical reasons (a fighting general was unable to direct the reserves or issue any other orders); for a discussion of the ideal position of the general in the context of Roman warfare, see Goldsworthy, *Roman Army at War*, 150–63.

[442] Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 217.

[443] Rolf Gundlach, "Ägyptische Militärgeschichte im Rahmen des phara-

Likewise, texts describing specific battles also praise pharaohs for their role in the battle. Ahmose recorded that Thutmose I fired the first arrow in a battle, striking an enemy in the neck.[448] In the Gebel Barkal Stela the personal valor of Thutmose III in battle is praised.

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onischen Staates: Der ägyptische König als 'roi de guerre' und 'roi connétable,'" in Gundlach, *Militärgeschichte des pharaonischen Ägypten*, 52.

[444] For the picture, see also Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 189; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 126; for more on his wounds, see Joyce M. Filer, "Ancient Egypt and Nubia as a Source of Information for Cranial Injuries," in *Material Harm: Archaeological Studies of War and Violence*, ed. John Carman (Glasgow: Cruithne, 1997), 65–66.

[445] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, 21; also *COS* 2.4A:24. See also a similar but shorter statement by Piye when he heard of attacks on Egypt: "Then [His Majesty] heard [this] defiantly, laughing and amused." Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 478.

[446] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 133; other translations in *COS* 1.38:79; *AEL* 1:227; *ANET*, 18–22.

[447] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 135; also *AEL* 1:198–200.

[448] *COS* 2.1:7.

> He is a king who fights alone without a multitude to support him. He is more useful than the hosts of many armies; no equal to him has been found, the warrior active of arm on the battlefield, in whose vicinity there is no abiding, who is immediately victorious over all foreign lands at the head of his army. He flashes forth between the two wings (of the army) like a star which traverses the firmament; who enters into the mass of men whilst his fiery blast is upon them with flame, making them into people who do not exist, who are prostrate in their blood. It is his uraeus which overthrows them for him, his flaming serpent which destroys his enemies. The numerous army of Mittani was overthrown in the space of an hour, completely wiped out like such as have never been after the manner of a consuming fire, as is done by the arms of the good god, great of might in battle, who wreaks slaughter on all men, being his own sole master.[449]

In the Memphis and Karnak Stelae of Amenhotep II he described his battle with enemy scouts, fighting alone without his troops. The stelae also include other descriptions of the pharaoh fighting in personally valiant ways, such as hunting and the taking of captives by himself.[450]

> His Majesty crossed the Orontes by water, wading forth like Reshpu. Then his Majesty turned about to view the rearguard of his army, when he saw some Asiatics coming creeping, equipped with weapons of war to attack the army of the king. His Majesty charged after them like the swoop of the divine falcon. They were (yet) self-confident but their hearts weakened when they had fallen one by one on top of his companion, their commander included. There was no one with his Majesty except himself with his valiant and mighty arm. His Majesty killed them by shooting (arrows).[451]

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[449] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 2 (Gebel Barkal Stela); also *COS* 2.2B:14–18; *ANET*, 238, 240; for further poetic descriptions of his martial ability, see *AEL* 2:35–38; *ANET*, 373–75.

[450] For a relief from Karnak depicting Amenhotep II standing in a chariot shooting at targets, see *ANEP*, 137, no. 390; for a seal depicting the pharaoh in a similar position, but this time in battle shooting the enemy; see Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 235; for a study of the many sporting exploits of Amenhotep II, see Peter Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, HÄB 26 (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1987), 191–213.

[451] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 30 (Memphis/Karnak Stela); also *COS* 2.3:19–22; *ANET*, 245–47; *ARE* 2:305–9.782–90.

In the Poem account of the Battle of Qadesh, Ramesses II recorded that he fought the enemy by himself when the Hittite launched a surprise attack on the unprepared Egyptian army.

> Then his majesty drove at a gallop and charged the forces of the Foe from Khatti, being alone by himself, none other with him. His majesty proceeded to look about him and found 2,500 chariots ringing him on his way out, of all the fast troops of the Foe from Khatti and the many countries with him—Arzawa, Masa, Pidasa, Keshkeh, Irun, Kizzuwadna, Khaleb, Ugarit, Kadesh, and Luka, three men to a team acting together. No officer was with me, no charioteer, No soldier of the army, no shield-bearer; My infantry, my chariotry yielded before them, Not one of them stood firm to fight with them.[452]
>
> Now when Menena my shield-bearer saw That a large number of chariots surrounded me, He became weak and faint-hearted, Great fear invading his body. He said to his majesty: "My good lord, Strong ruler, great savior of Egypt in wartime, We stand alone in the midst of battle, Abandoned by soldiers and chariotry, What for do you stand to protect them? Let us get clear, save us, Usermare-sotpenre!" His majesty said to his shield-bearer: "Stand firm, steady your heart, my shield-bearer! I will charge them as a falcon pounces, I will slaughter, butcher, fling to the ground; Why do you fear these weaklings Whose multitudes I disregard?" His majesty then rushed forward, At a gallop he charged the midst of the foe, For the sixth time he charged them. I was after them like Baal in his moment of power, I slew them without pause.[453]

Many years after the battle of Qadesh, Ramesses II defended his version of the events in a letter to the Hittite king Hattusili III (who knew that the Egyptian king had not won the great victory that he claimed to have won).

> I penetrated, as a matter of fact, into the midst of the enemy from the land of Hatti and struck the enemy, when the army of Muwatalli, king of the Land of Hatti, came together with the many lands which found themselves with him…. And the king of the Land of Hatti fell upon me with his army and all lands which were with him. But I brought about his defeat quite single-handed, although my army was not with me, and my

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[452] *AEL* 2:64–65; also *COS* 2.5A:34; *RITA* 2.3A:5.

[453] *AEL* 2:68–69; also *COS* 2.5A:36; *RITA* 2.3A:9–10.

> chariots were not with me. And I led the enemy from these lands of Hatti and brought them into the land of Egypt.[454]

In the Ramesseum version of the battle of Qadesh, not only did Ramesses II fight the enemies by himself, but the Hittite ruler raised his arms in praise of him.

> The stand that His Majesty made, when he sat to the North-West of Qadesh, and entered amidst the massive force of the fallen ones of Hatti, he being entirely alone, no other with him. He found 2,500 chariot-units in 4 groups surrounding him on all sides, (so) he slaughtered them, made into heaps before his steeds, he killing all the chiefs, the brothers of the Fallen One of Hatti, along with his high officers, his troops and his chariotry. He sent them headlong, on their faces, he forced them to plunge, one after the other, into the waters of the Orontes, His Majesty was after them, like a fierce lion, slaying them on the spot.
>
> Now, the Fallen One of Hatti stood, turning backward, his arms (raised) in praise of the Good god.[455]

Ramesses III claimed he fought the Sea People by himself. "Power amid a multitude and unequalled, he strikes down millions, alone, by himself. All lands are despised and insignificant before him. 'He appears exactly as the Sun (does)!', they say. Their messengers and their envoys who behold him in Egypt; (they) bowed down and were cowed before him."[456]

Alongside these texts, beginning in the New Kingdom the pharaohs often portray themselves in reliefs as participating directly in warfare.[457] Scenes of the pharaoh in his chariot shooting the enemy and running them over are ubiquitous, such as the scene recorded on a chariot of Thutmose IV of the pharaoh shooting his bow from a chariot and Tutankhamen performing a similar feat (fig. 4.8 above).[458] Ramesses III even portrayed himself fighting on foot against the fleeing Libyans.[459] Recent archaeological evidence also indicates that at least some pharaohs directly participated in battle, as the recently discovered body of Senebkay (in 2014) appears to have suffered from war-inflected wounds, perhaps being hit from below while riding a chariot or a horse and then receiving axe blows to the head.[460]

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[454] Bryce, *Letters of the Great Kings of the Ancient Near East*, 90.

[455] R.19 in *RITA* 2.3C:20–21; the text is above the king to the right in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:100; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 3; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 293.

[456] "Sea Peoples' Campaign, Medinet Habu: Great Inscription of Year 8," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.9:32–33.

[457] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 76; Sacco, "Art and Imperial Ideology," 205–8; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 44–57.

[458] For Thutmose IV, see *ANEP*, 103, nos. 314–16; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altä-*

One interesting aspect of pharaohs' action in battle is their use of fiery breath against their enemies.[461] Amun describes Shoshenq I as having "fiery breath."[462] A text praising Ramesses II (in P.Anast. 2) says that his enemies "lie prostrate instantly due to his fiery breath."[463] The motif of fire-breathing was often attributed to the uraeus, the image of a cobra on the pharaoh's headdress that functioned as a symbol of royalty. According to myth, the uraeus was the eye of the sun god Ra, possessing the power to bring fire upon Egypt's enemies. Ramesses II says that his Uraeus-serpent "spat her fiery flame in the face(s) of my foes."[464] In all these texts fire-breathing demonstrates the military dominance of Egypt over their enemies.[465]

However, during the Late Kingdom it appears that the pharaohs distanced themselves from the battlefield. Piye sent his generals out with the army, and they reported back to him the results of the battles (though he

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gyptischen Kulturgeschichte, 2:1; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 236. For Tutankhamen, see *ANEP*, 104, no. 318 (Cairo Museum JE 61467); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:217; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 237.

[459] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 2: Ramses III's Temple within the Great Inclosure of Amon, Part II; and Ramses III's Temple in the Precinct of Mut*, OIP 35 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), pl. 82; for a similar picture from Abu Simbel of Ramesses II fighting on foot, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:182; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 252.

[460] Nick Romeo, "Pharaoh of 'Lost Dynasty' Died Brutal Death, Forensic Study Reveals," *National Geographic*, March 3, 2016, http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394e.

[461] For more on fire-breathing in the ancient Near East, see Brittany Kim and Charlie Trimm, "YHWH the Dragon: Exploring a Neglected Biblical Metaphor for the Divine Warrior and Its Bearing on the Translation of *ʾap*," *BT* 65 (2014): 165–84.

[462] K. A. Kitchen, *Poetry of Ancient Egypt*, DMA 1 (Jonsered: Åströms, 1999), 437.

[463] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 139; also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 40.

[464] *COS* 2.5:37.

[465] A further reference to a fire-breathing deity is found in an Egyptian hymn to Mar written in Aramaic (ca. 300 BCE), which states, "Mar, from your snorts all the earth perishes; like smoke, lord, from your breaths" (*COS* 1.99:315).

eventually joined them on the campaign).[466] Psamtik II was relaxing at a lake when a messenger reported to him that his troops had defeated the Nubians.[467] The later pharaohs still claim to be master warriors, such as Taharqa (Twenty-fifth Dynasty), who boasted that he was "a champion, one uniquely valiant, a powerful king who has no equal … who sends forth his arrow that he might overpower chiefs."[468]

The royal princes (at least during the New Kingdom) were expected to have a military background to prepare them to be king (though they were also expected to serve in civil capacities) and were often connected to the chariotry.[469] Seti I wrote that he led the army while his father Ramesses I was still alive. "I mustered his army and give it unity of purpose. I sought out for him the condition of the Two Lands, and I wielded for him my strong arm as his 'Bodily Protection' in foreign lands whose names were (hitherto) unknown. I was a valiant hero before him, so that he opened his eyes to (= acknowledged) my goodness."[470] In other ways the princes appear to take an active role in the battle, especially in leading prisoners.[471] A relief of Ramesses II from Beit El-Wali shows Ramesses II chasing fleeing Nubians while two of his sons (Amenhiwonemef and Khaemwase) follow behind him in their own chariots.[472] The list of the princes of Ramesses II includes many who occupied military offices.[473] However, in a relief of the Battle of Qadesh, a fan bearer passes along the command to keep the princes out of battle. “The arrival of the Fan-bearer of Pharaoh, LPH, to tell the Royal Children and the […]s of the God’s Mother, ‘[Do not ?] leave by the West side of the camp, keep yourselves clear of the battle!’”[474]

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[466] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 479–81.

[467] *AEL* 3:85–86.

[468] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 537; also *COS* 4.4A:19.

[469] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 178–79.

[470] "Abydos, Dedicatory Stela for Ramesses I," in *RITA* 1.Seti I.54:94.

[471] For the inscriptions from reliefs of princes leading prisoners, see R.53–55 in *RITA* 2.3C:23. For a relief from Luxor, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:63; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 290. In another inscription Ramesses II instructs his sons about collecting the prisoners; see "Luxor, Forecourt, W. Wall: N. Side, Bottom Register," *RITA* 2.18:44; for more on the princes leading captives, see Marjorie M. Fisher, *The Sons of Ramesses II*, ÄAT 53 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001), 1:53–55.

[472] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:165; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 8; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 261.

[473] "Synopsis of Lists III: the 'Standard Lists,'" *RITA* 2.321:560–61; for a similar list of princes who served military functions for Ramesses III, see *RITA* 5.152–57. Ramesses III (305–11). For more on the military roles occupied by princes in the New Kingdom, see Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 79–91; Fisher, *Sons of Ramesses II*.

Pharaohs also portrayed themselves as great hunters and sportsmen.[475] Thutmose III boasted of an elephant hunt on his way back home after a campaign.[476] One tomb painting of Tutankhamen depicts him riding a chariot while hunting gazelles and ostriches with his bow.[477] A text in P.Anast. 2 praised Merenptah for his ability to shoot lions: “Shooting with strong bow at powerful lions.”[478] Ramesses III showed himself in a chariot hunting lions and bulls.[479] Amenhotep II claimed great brilliance as an archer, including an anecdote about testing three hundred different bows to determine which were the best.[480] An ostracon from the Twentieth Dynasty that was found in the Valley of the Kings (though not in a tomb) shows a pharaoh hunting a lion with a dog helping in the hunt (fig. 4.39).

4.9.2. Hittite

In general, the Hittite kings often depicted themselves in the annals as going on campaigns with their troops and spoke of victories in the first person singular.[481] In the Deeds of Hattusili I, the king recounted that he

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[474] R.9 in *RITA* 2.3C:19; the inscription is slightly to the right of the camp in a relief from the Ramesseum; see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:92; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 1; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 291.

[475] For more on the athletic activities of the pharaoh (running, archery, and riding horses and chariots), see Decker, *Sport and Games of Ancient Egypt*, 19–59.

[476] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 3 (Gebel Barkal Stela).

[477] *ANEP*, 60, no. 190 (Cairo Museum).

[478] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 140.

[479] For lions, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:114b; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pl. 35. For bulls, see Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pl. 117.

[480] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 20 (Great Sphinx Stela); a relief shows a tutor teaching the young Amenhotep II how to shoot the bow; see Decker, *Sport and Games of Ancient Egypt*, 37; for more on Amenhotep II as an archer, see Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, 200–212.

[481] Much of the following discussion is drawn from Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 297–317.

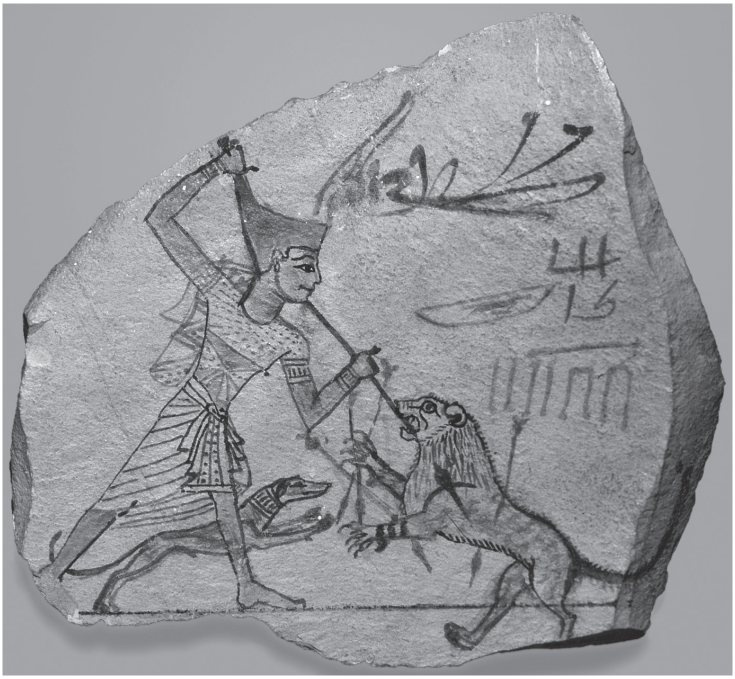

Fig. 4.39. Ramesside pharaoh hunting a lion with a dog. Metropolitan 26.7.1453. Photo courtesy of Metropolitan Museum of Art.

crossed the Euphrates on foot at the head of his troops.[482] As recounted above in the discussion of single combat, Hattusili III claimed that he fought personally in battle before he became king and killed the enemy commander himself.[483] Another anecdote in the Deeds of Suppiluliuma records the king and a group of soldiers defeating some enemy soldiers.[484] A text from either Tudhaliya IV or Suppiluliuma II includes the following description of danger for a king: "If in the same way it were to become difficult for the king, if the chariot-driver were to flee down from the chariot, … or I were not to find an arrow to shoot against the enemy."[485] Hittite

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[482] Ibid., 298 (*KBo* 10.2 iii 30–31; *CTH* 4.II.A).

[483] Hoffner, "Hittite Analogue to the David and Goliath Contest," 222 (*CTH* 81); for another translation, see *COS* 1.77:201.

[484] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 312 (*KBo* 14.3 iv 26–33; *CTH* 40.II.3.F).

[485] Ibid., 311 (*KBo* 4.14 iii 47–48; *CTH* 123).

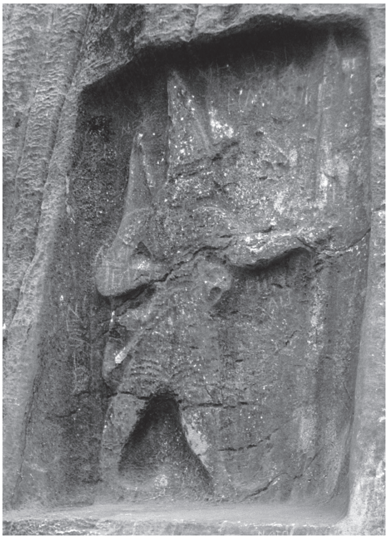

Fig. 4.40. Hittite vassal Tarkasnawa as warrior at Karabel. Relief in the Karabel Pass, Turkey (near Izmir). Photo courtesy of Klaus-Peter Simon, Wikimedia Commons.

bodyguards of the king at the palace accompanied him on journeys, and played a role in ceremonies, but "there is no evidence as to whether or not they also accompanied him on campaign and into battle."[486] Hittite kings also engaged in hunting. Anitta claimed that in a single day he killed over two hundred animals, including lions, pigs, boars, leopards, deer, and gazelle.[487] Tudhaliya IV in particular emphasized hunting and the worship of the Stag-god.[488]

However, it is not as clear if the Hittite kings personally fought in the battles. Hittite reliefs depict kings as warriors, such as the rock reliefs at Karabel (fig. 4.40) and Hemite, but not as part of a battle.[489] Most scholars think that the Hittite kings were rarely physically involved in the battles.[490] Hittite kings also did not brag about enjoying carnage in battle as the pharaohs did.[491] Likewise, Hittite texts record many occasions when the king was away from the battle. For example, in the Siege of Urshu the king is away from battle and only hears what happens through messengers. Other Hittite kings mention sending their generals to lead their troops against the enemy, though the most common reason for this is that the Hittites fought on multiple fronts at the same time and the king was busy fighting in a different region or was engaged in fulfilling a ritual obligation.

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[486] Ibid., 231.

[487] *COS* 1.72:184 (*CTH* 1.A); *ANEHST*, 218.

[488] John David Hawkins, "Tudḫaliya the Hunter," in *The Life and Times of Ḫattušili III and Tutḫaliya IV: Proceedings of a Symposium Held in Honour of J. de Roos, 12–13 December 2003, Leiden*, ed. Theo P. J. van den Hout, PIHANS 103 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2006), 49–76; Billie Jean Collins, "Hero, Field Master, King: Animal Mastery in Hittite Texts and Iconography," in *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, ed. Derek B. Counts and Bettina Arnold (Budapest: Archaeolingua Foundation, 2010), 66–71.

[489] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 131; for reliefs of the king as a warrior, see Trevor Bryce, "Hittite State and Society," in Genz, *Insights into Hittite History and Archaeology*, 86; Dominik Bonatz, "The Divine Image of the King: Religious Representations of Political Power in the Hittite Empire," in *Represen-*

The princes appear to have been involved in military leadership to some degree.[492] In the Deeds of Suppiluliuma, Suppiluliuma emphasizes that his father fought in battles alongside his grandfather (that is, when his father was a crown prince).[493] Hattusili I expected his grandson Mursili I to go on campaigns, as indicated by this command: "[Only after] three years let him go on campaign…. Raise him (as) a valia[nt king]. I[f as a child] you take him on campaign, bring [him] back [safely]."[494] A Middle Hittite text expresses the king's wish about the role of the prince as a general: "If, however, I My Majesty am not personally going on campaign, let the royal prince or [great] lord, whom I commission for the army, lead the army on campaign. Because I My Majesty will place [the army] in his hands, let all the army always listen to him. Do the […] of My Majesty."[495] Tudhaliya IV went on a campaign against the Kaska when he was only twelve years old.[496]

4.9.3. Early Mesopotamian

Third millennium kings claim to have actively participated in battles in some cases.[497] E-anatum described being shot in battle, but the details are unclear because of lacuna on both sides of the text. "He fought with him.

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tations of Political Power: Case Histories from Times of Change and Dissolving Order in the Ancient Near East, ed. Marlies Heinz and Marian H. Feldman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 121–23.

[490] 490. Bryce, *Life and Society in the Hittite World*, 109.

[491] 491. Ibid., 100; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 131.

[492] 492. Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 319–20, 413–17.

[493] 493. *COS* 1.74:186–87 (*CTH* 40).

[494] 494. Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 298 (*KUB* 1.16 ii 42, 44–45; *CTH* 6).

[495] 495. Ibid., 416 (*KUB* 13.20 i 16–18; *CTH* 259.B).

[496] 496. Bryce, *Life and Society in the Hittite World*, 109.

[497] 497. For a general survey of the topic in early Mesopotamia, see Alfonso Archi,

A person shot an arrow at E-anatum. He was shot through(?) by the arrow and *had difficulty moving*. He cried out in the face of it."[498] Sargon the Great said that he "personally captured the king (of Uruk)."[499] A hymn to Shulgi (Shulgi D) describes him fighting battles personally. "[I will] raise [my] spear [against the …], I will set up my emblem against the border of the foreign land. I will fill my quiver, My bow will distend, ready to shoot, like a raging serpent, The barbed-arrows will flash before me like lightning."[500] One tradition asserts that Ur-nammu was killed by the Gutians in battle.[501] Visual art also depicts kings fighting their enemies.[502] The Stela of Vultures (fig. 4.41) portrays the king Eannatum leading his troops into battle (both on foot and in a chariot), and a relief from Naram-sin (fig. 4.42) shows him at the head of his troops.[503]

The king Naram-Sin fought so valiantly that he was elevated to the status of deity (though it is not clear whether he participated in the actual fighting).[504] The narrative of Gilgamesh and Akka begins with Gilgamesh serving as a vassal to Akka, who demanded that he dig wells. Gilgamesh decided to rebel against Akka (trusting in Inanna), but was only able to do so with the young men, as the elders rejected his decision. After being appointed king, Akka besieged Uruk (the town of Gilgamesh), but the awesome presence of Gilgamesh on the walls broke the siege (though he does not lead any of the sorties against the enemy) and led to his recognition of Gilgamesh as a king.[505] A legend about Sargon the Great from several centuries after his life praised him for his athletic ability. "I saw a gazelle and I threw a brick into the river. But while I was running, my

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"Who Led the Army of Ebla? Administrative Documents vs. Commemorative Texts," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 19–20.

[498] RIME 1:131, E.1.9.3.1, ix.1–6.

[499] RIME 2:16–17, E2.1.1.3, 17–20.

[500] Jacob Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns: Sumerian Royal Hymns Glorifying King Šulgi of Ur*, BISNELC (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1981), 78–79 (Šulgi D, 177–181).

[501] RIME 3.2:20, E3/2.1.1.

[502] For several of these images, see Peter A. Miglus, "Kings Go into Battle: Representations of the Mesopotamian Ruler as a Warrior," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 239–40.

[503] Eannatum: *ANEP*, 95, no. 300 (Louvre AO 16109). Naram-sin: *ANEP*, 100, no. 309 (Louvre Sb 4).

[504] *COS* 2.90:244; RIME 2:113–14, E2.1.4.10.

[505] *COS* 1.171:550–52; Jacobsen, *Harps That Once*, 345–55.

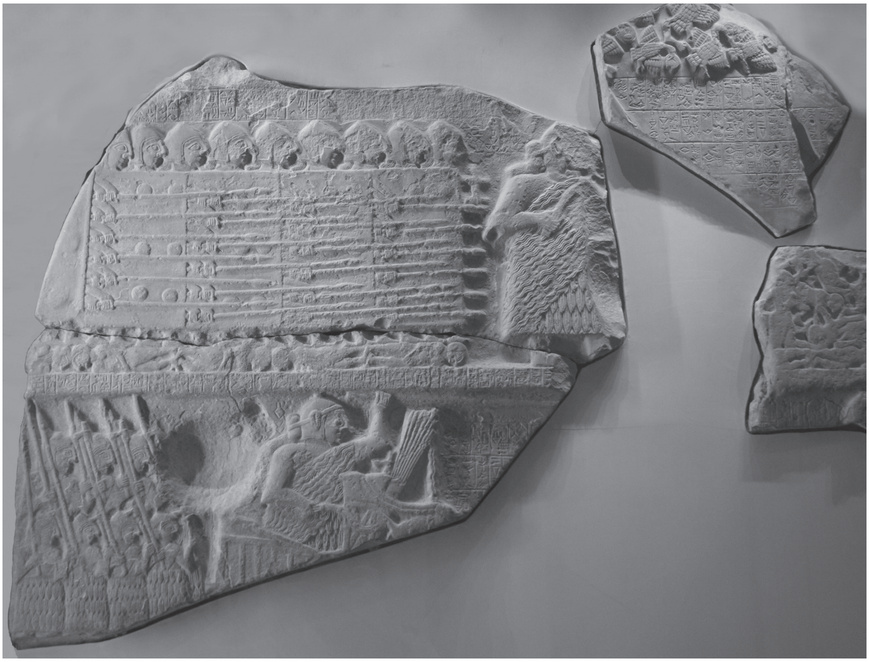

Fig. 4.41. Stela of Vultures. Louvre AO 16109. Picture courtesy of Kikuyu3, Wikimedia Commons.

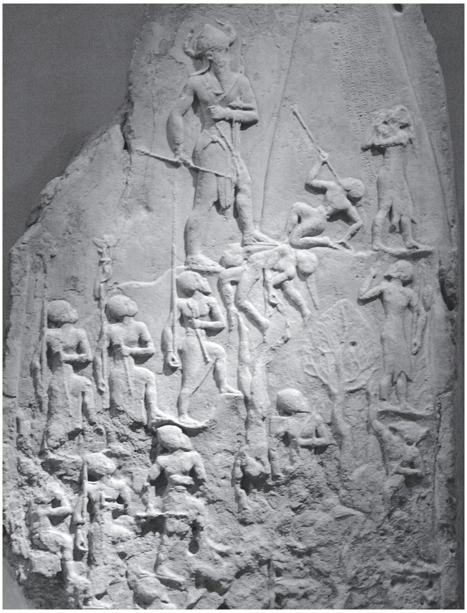

Fig. 4.42. Victory Stela of Naram-Sin. Louvre Sb 4. Photo courtesy of Rama, Wikimedia Commons.

girdle broke; I attached a snake, ran on and caught the gazelle. (Then) I took the brick out of the water."[506]

In the second millennium, the kings of Assyria and Mari (and their princes) at least went on campaigns. Ishme-Dagan referred to his private escort of soldiers that regularly traveled with him (ARM 4.34 = LAPO 17.611 = Sasson 3.3.c.i.2). In one letter Shamshi-Adad wrote to his son Yasmah-Adad about the victory of his other son Ishme-Dagan to encourage him as he prepared for his own battles. "Here your brother has achieved victory while you are lying there among women. Now then, be a man when you will go with the army to Qatna! Just like your brother has set a great name, you as well must set yourself a great name during the campaign of Qatna!"[507] In another letter, he was rebuked again by his father for not leading armies. "As for you, how long will we have to lead you? Are you a child (and) not a man? Is there no hair on your cheeks? Do you not see your brother who leads wide armies? Give commands, then, in your palace and house."[508] Shamshi-Adad described himself as a warrior when he devoted to Ishtar "a bronze kettledrum with good sound (and) befitting his being a warrior."[509]

The epic of Zimri-Lim emphasized his solidarity with the troops on campaign.[510] However, Bahdi-Lim, the governor of Mari, advised Zimri-Lim in a letter about the role of the king in battle. Specifically, the king should "go among the shock troops, chariots, and gear. And if my lord goes on campaign, my lord will arrive before the troops and pray [for] ⸢the troops⸣."[511] In another letter Bahdi-Lim rebuked Zimri-Lim for walking with the lightly armed troops rather than the more heavily armed shock troops. "And what are these things that my lord would walk among lightly armed [troops], among border guards? ⸢Since⸣ my ⸢heart⸣ became concerned, I did not ⸢abandon⸣ guarding (my lord's) person. Why would my lord ⸢walk⸣ […] together with lightly armed border guards? My lord must [walk] among shock troops."[512] An official rebuked Zimri-Lim for his conduct in battle. “My lord must not approach the gate of Mišlan, as he did yesterday. My lord must not place himself in the front of the troops; rather, my lord should be in the ‘navel’ of his troops. Soldiers should attack but my lords should just observe. My lord should give a gift to the one who exerts himself, but he should protect himself.”[513] Reliefs from the second millennium portray the kings in battle, but in a more stylized way with the king acting alongside a deity in single combat against an enemy.[514]

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[506] 506. Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 154.

[507] 507. *ANEHST*, 116 (ARM 1.69+ = LAPO 17.452 = Sasson 3.6.a.i.2).

[508] 508. Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 11 (ARM 1.113 = LAPO 16.36 = Sasson 1.1.c); see also ARM 1.73 = LAPO 16.29.

[509] 509. RIMA 1:58, A.0.39.6, 6–14.

[510] 510. *COS* 4.51:233 (A.3152+M.5665+).

[511] 511. Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 222 (ARM 26.119 = Sasson 1.4.c.ii.1).

[512] 512. Ibid., 243 (ARM 26.176 = ARM 6.64 = LAPO 17.620).

4.9.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian kings delighted in depicting themselves as warriors personally participating in battle.[515] Assyrian inscriptions often began with generic descriptions of the king’s martial power, such as this text by Adad-narari II.

> Adad-nārārī, strong king, king of Assyria, king of the four quarters, the one who defeats his enemies, I, the king capable in battle, overwhelmer of cities, the one who scorches the mountains of (foreign) lands, I, the virile warrior, the one who controls those opposed to him, who is inflamed against the evil and wicked, I, I scorch like the god Girru (fire god), I overwhelm like the deluge, […], I have no successful opponent;
>
> I am belligerent like…, I strike the wicked like the fierce dagger, I constantly blow like the onslaught of the wind, I rage like the gale, I uproot (people) like [hair] of the skin, I overwhelm like the net, I enclose like the trap, at the mention of my strong name the princes of the four quarters sway like reeds in a storm, at the onset of my campaign their weapons melt as though in a furnace.[516]

After describing his intellectual accomplishments, Assurbanipal detailed his martial prowess and specifies that he received martial training while he was still young. “This is what I did all of my days with a select companion: I cantered on thoroughbreds (and) rode spirited purebreds. I grasped the bow (and) let fly the arrow, as befits valour. I threw quivering lances as if they were darts. I held the reins (and) like a charioteer I made the wheels turn. Like a craftsman I shaped *arītu* and *kabāba* shields."[517]

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[513] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 203 (A.1975 = Sasson 3.4.a.iii.note).

[514] For several of these reliefs, see Miglus, “Kings Go into Battle,” 240–41.

[515] For a study showing how this played a role in emphasizing their masculinity, see Cynthia R. Chapman, *The Gendered Language of Warfare in the Israelite-Assyrian Encounter*, HSM 62 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 20–59.

[516] RIMA 2:148, A.0.99.2, 16–22.

The Assyrian kings also offer many specific examples of their martial power. Tukulti-Ninurta I claimed that he captured the enemy king in the midst of the battle. "In the midst of that battle I captured Kaštiliašu, king of the Kassites, (and) trod with my feet upon his lordly neck as though it were a footstool."[518] Sargon II took his own chariot in his eighth campaign against Rusa. "With only my single chariot and the horsemen who ride with me, who never leave me in hostile or friendly territory, the elite squadron of Sin-ah-usur, I fell upon him like a furious arrow, I defeated him and forced him to retreat."[519] The claim that he fought in battles personally is substantiated by his death in battle at Tabal, as described in the Eponym Chronicle.[520] Sennacherib claimed he captured the enemy troops personally. "In the thick of battle, I captured alive the Egyptian charioteers and princes (lit. "the sons of the king"), together with the charioteers of the king of the land Meluḫḫa."[521] A relief from Bavian depicts him riding a horse in battle.[522] He emphasized his own role in the battle against Babylon.

> I raged up like a lion, then put on armor (and) placed a helmet suitable for combat on my head. In my anger, I rode quickly in my exalted battle chariot, which lays enemies low. I took in my hand the mighty bow that the god Aššur had granted to me (and) I grasped in my hand an arrow that cuts off life. I roared loudly like a storm (and) thundered like the god Adad against all of the troops of the wicked enemies. By the command of the god Aššur, the great lord, my lord, I blew like the onset of a severe storm against the enemy on (their) flanks and front lines. With the weapons of the god Aššur, my lord, and my fierce battle array, I turned them

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[517] Silvie Zamazalová, "The Education of Neo-Assyrian Princes," in Radner, *Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture*, 313–30 (L^4 ll 19–24); see also *ARAB* 2:379, §986.

[518] RIMA 1:245, A.0.78.5, 59–63.

[519] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 798; also *COS* 4.42:204; Rusa himself fled from another battle (probably against the Cimmerians) alone on a horse, leading his troops (who thought he had died) to appoint his son Melartua as king (SAA 5.90).

[520] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 174–75.

[521] RINAP 3.1:176, 22, iii.3–6.

[522] Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 282.

> back and made them retreat. I shot the troops of the enemy with *uṣṣu*-arrows and *mulmullu*-arrows, and pierced all of their corpses like…[523]

Assyrian reliefs similarly portray the kings personally involved in battle. The role of Assurnasirpal II in battle as the greatest of warriors is clear, such as seen in his role as an archer in a siege (fig. 4.43).[524] Another relief shows him shooting the enemy from his chariot in battle.[525] Shalmaneser portrayed himself in the Balawat Gates attacking his enemy with a bow (fig. 4.44), though it should be noted that in a different relief he also portrayed himself watching a siege from a neighboring hill and not taking an active part in the battle (fig. 4.45).[526] Tiglath-pileser III attacked a man on a camel from his chariot with a bow.[527]

However, it appears that the Assyrian kings after Sargon II avoided direct involvement in battle, perhaps because of his death in battle. Sennacherib and Assurbanipal never show themselves in battle in their reliefs (very few reliefs from Esarhaddon are extant).[528] Likewise, Sennacherib and the kings after him do not depict themselves in chariots during battle as the earlier Assyrian kings had done (with the few exceptions noted above).[529] This reticence to be actively involved is also found in a few letters. An anonymous writer instructed Esarhaddon to avoid personal battle: "The king, my lord, should not advance [to the b]attle. [Just a]s your royal fathers have done, st[ay] on the hill, and [let] your [ma]gnates [do] the bat[tle]" (SAA 16.77). Another letter indicates that Assurbanipal should not ride a horse, perhaps because it was too dangerous: "The crown prin[ce, my lord], should not ride a horse, nor should he [draw] a bow.

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[523] RINAP 3.1:182–83, 22, v.67–82.

[524] See also BM 124552 and BM 124554 for similar scenes of Assurnasirpal II in battle.

[525] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 117 (Or.Dr.III.SW10).

[526] King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 20 (BM 124658, band 4).

[527] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 15–16 (Or.Dr.III.C11 = Bombay Prince of Wales Museum VAM 78).

[528] Paolo Matthiae, "Image, Ideology, and Politics: A Historical Consideration of the Message of Neo-Assyrian Reliefs," in Gaspa, *From Source to History*, 387–404; Karen Radner, "Fame and Prizes: Competition and War in the Neo-Assyrian Empire," in *Competition in the Ancient World*, ed. Nick Fisher and Hans van Wees (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2011), 41; Reade, "Neo-Assyrian Court and Army," 92–93.

[529] Nadali, "Assyrian Open Field Battles," 134–35.

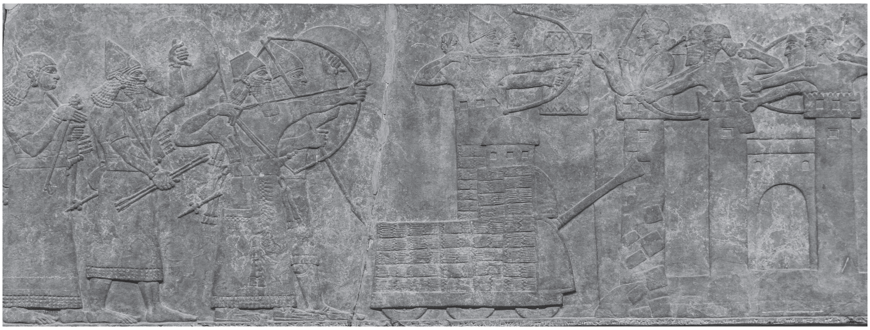

Fig. 4.43. Assurnasirpal II in a siege. BM 124536. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

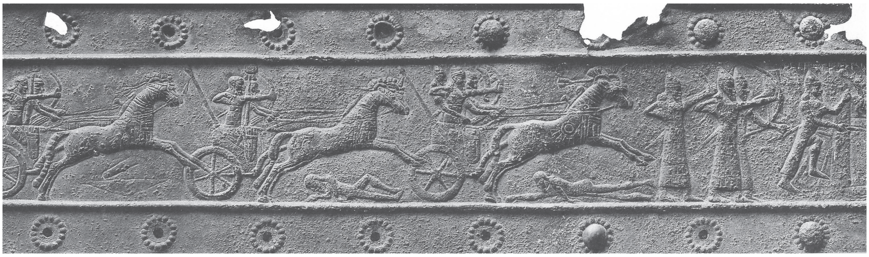

Fig. 4.44. Shalmaneser III in battle. Band 9 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 52.

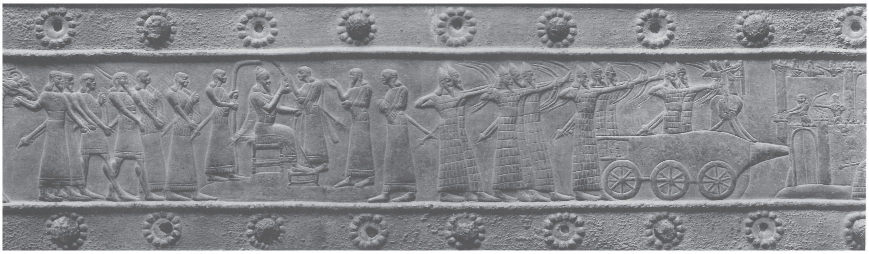

Fig. 4.45. Shalmaneser III watching a battle. BM 124658 (band 4) of Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 20.

(However), let him do as [he] deems best" (SAA 10.192). Assurbanipal's relief and inscriptions of battle at the Ulai River contrast the role of the two kings in battle: the Elamite king died in battle, while the Assyrian king was far away. "Head of Te-Um[man, king of Elam], which in the thick of bat[tle] a common soldier in my army [cut off]. To (give me) the good ne[ws] they hastily dispatched (it) to Assy[ria]."[530]

Beginning with Tiglath-pileser I the Assyrian kings also portrayed themselves as great hunters.[531] Assurnasirpal II depicted himself hunting lions (fig. 4.46) and bulls in his reliefs (BM 124532).[532] In his inscriptions he even mentioned killing ostriches in a hunt.[533] A long series of reliefs from Assurbanipal depicts the preparation for the lion hunt (including the citizens of Nineveh climbing a hill to watch the hunt), hunters holding large dogs on leashes, a lion being released from a cage, the king shooting a bow from his chariot at a lion, the king attacking a lion with a spear, and many dead lions (fig. 4.47).[534] Other reliefs show him attacking a lion on foot with a sword and hunting a lion on shore from a boat.[535]

4.9.5. Later Empires

The Kassite king Simbar-Shipak is said in a chronicle to have died in combat.[536]A *kudurru* of Marduk-nadin-ahhe shows a Babylonian king dressed as a warrior (fig. 4.48). According to the Babylonian Chronicles and the royal inscriptions, the Babylonian kings appear to have accompanied their troops on their campaigns, though the level of their active participation is unclear. Nebuchadnezzar II led campaigns in the Levant while still a crown prince.[537] When Nabonidus went to Teima, he left control of the armed forces in the hands of the crown prince.[538]

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[530] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, 95; pl. 288 (Or.Dr.II.2 = BM 124801).

[531] For more on the Assyrian kings hunting, see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 143–49; Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 244–58; Karlsson, *Relations of Power*, 133–40.

[532] For an example of hunting lions, see *ANEP*, 57, no. 184 (BM 124534).

[533] RIMA 2:216, A.0101.1, 49.

[534] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pls. 5–13 (Or.Dr.V.36–38 = BM 124850–124870).

[535] For hunting on foot, see ibid., pls. 46, 49 (Or.Dr.V.10 = BM 124875). For hunting from a boat, see ibid., pl. 54 (Or.Dr.V.22).

[536] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 132–33.

[537] Ibid., 224–29.

[538] Ibid., 234–27; for background, see Paul-Alain Beaulieu, *The Reign of*

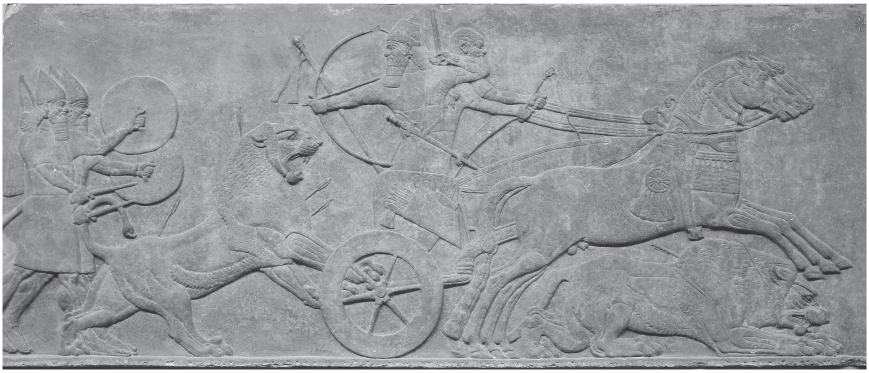

Fig. 4.46. Assurnasirpal's lion hunt. BM 124534. Photo courtesy of Gtoffoletto, Wikimedia Commons.

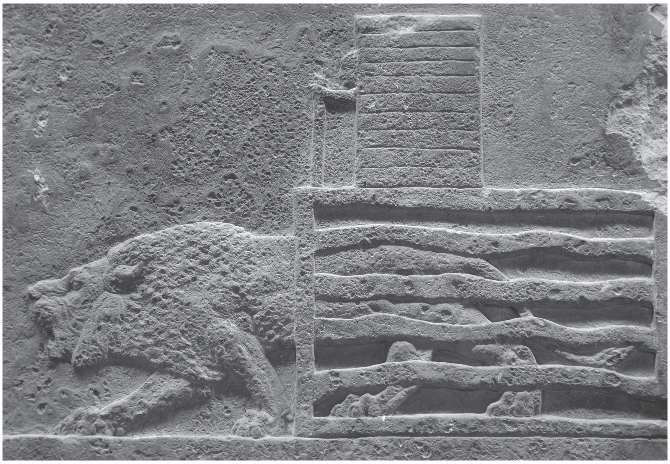

Fig. 4.47. Assurbanipal's lion cage. BM 124869. Photo courtesy of Carole Raddato, Wikimedia Commons.

The Persian kings portrayed themselves as great warriors.[539] Although monumental martial images are not characteristic of the Persians, many seals and coins depict the king in action against his enemies, such as a seal showing a king attacking an enemy with a spear while his troops gather

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Nabonidus King of Babylon 556–539 B.C., YNER 10 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 150.

[539] Briant, "Achaemenid Empire," 111–13.

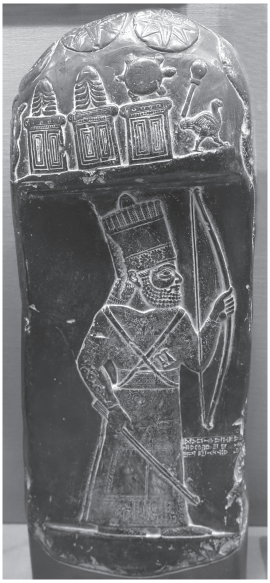

Fig. 4.48. *Kudurru* of Marduk-nadin-ahhe of Babylon. BM 90841 (photo of cast in Oriental Institute). Photo courtesy of Daderot, Wikimedia Commons.

behind him (Metropolitan 1999.325.114).[540] Another Persian seal shows a Persian king fighting lion griffons (fig. 4.49). Seals also depict the Persian king as a mighty hunter.[541] According to Herodotus, Cyrus died in battle fighting the Massagetai (*Hist.* 1.214).[542] Darius proclaimed the martial ability that Ahura Mazda has given to him (an almost identical version of the text has been found elsewhere in the name of Xerxes).

> Moreover this (is) my ability, that my body is strong. As a fighter I am a good fighter. At once my intelligence stands in its place, whether I see a rebel or not. Both by intelligence and by command at that time I regard myself as superior to panic, when I see a rebel just as when I do not see (one).
>
> I am furious in the strength of my revenge with both hands and both feet. As a horseman I am a good horseman. As a bowman I am a good bowman, both on foot and on horseback. As a spearman I am a good spearman, both on foot and on horseback.[543]

Xenophon emphasized Cyrus's martial and hunting prowess. In one story, he recounted how Cyrus killed all the animals in the hunting park of his father (*Hist.* 1.4.5). However, the Greek sources also portray the Persian kings as cowardly during battles, often fleeing when the battles

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[540] For several examples of coins and seals, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 214–15; Ryan P. Bonfiglio, "Divine Warrior or Persian King? The Archer Metaphor in Zechariah 9," in *Iconographic Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: An Introduction to Its Method and Practice*, ed. Izaak J. de Hulster, Brent A. Strawn, and Ryan P. Bonfiglio (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 227–41.

[541] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 230–32.

[542] However, other authors provide variant accounts of the death of Cyrus; see these versions in Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 99–102.

[543] Ibid., 504–5 (DNb §§2g–2h).

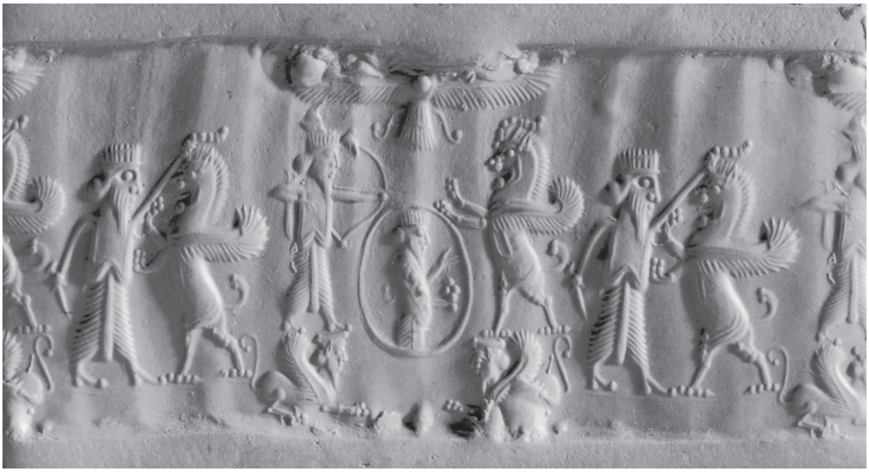

Fig. 4.49. Persian king fighting lion griffons. Walters 42.775. Photo courtesy of Walters Art Museum.

turned against them. Although this might be partly due to a Greek prejudice against the Persian "barbarians," it appears that while the Persian kings often traveled on military campaigns, they stayed safe in the middle of their troops rather than participating directly in the battles.[544]

4.9.6. West Semitic

The West Semitic kings apparently went on campaigns with their troops, but further details are difficult to determine. A prince from Ugarit wrote to his mother reporting that he had been busy fighting for six days.[545] Bar-Rakib wrote that his father Panamuwa died while on a campaign with Tigalth-pileser III.[546] In several battles in the Old Testament kings were targeted or died in battle, such as the death of Ahab at Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kgs 22:29–36) and Josiah at Megiddo (2 Kgs 23:29). In the days of Samuel, the people are recorded as saying that they desire a king to "go out before us and fight our battles" (1 Sam 8:20), while David becomes such a king in the literature surrounding his name.

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[544] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 227–28.
[545] *COS* 3.45G:93 (RIH 78.12).
[546] *COS* 2.37:160.

5
Results of Battles

After the battle had ended, the victors could now reap the benefits of their victory (or from the other perspective, they can abuse the defeated). After looking at flight, the most immediate task of the defeated armies, this chapter will look at plundering, the humiliation of the defeated, urbicide, the extermination of enemies after the battle, political and religious results of conquest, and other responses by the victors. The chapter will end by returning to the defeated to survey the variety of responses to defeat and examining a few cases of conflicted memories, where the two armies remembered the battles in very different ways.

5.1. Flight

Since most texts about warfare in the ancient Near East were written by the victors, the description of the flight of the defeated enemy is one of the most common results of a battle as the victors boast of their victory. Kings often describe these flights with grand metaphors, emphasizing the weakness and humiliation of the enemy.

5.1.1. Egyptian

Egyptian pharaohs often described their enemies fleeing. When Thutmose III attacked the Canaanite troops in the plains of Megiddo, they fled before his attack (since Thutmose III does not refer to the flight of the enemy after the siege of Megiddo, it might mean that they surrendered rather than being defeated in a battle). In the Gebel Barkal stela he wrote that the enemy fled because Amun-Re had put the fear of the pharaoh into the enemy.[1] Ramesses II also boasted about the flight of the Hittite troops in front of him. "Not one of them found his hand in order to fight. Their hearts became weak in their bodies through fear of me, All their arms were weak and they were unable to shoot. They did not find their wits to take up their spears. I felled them into the water (just) as crocodiles descend, And they fell down on their faces, on top of each other."[2] Merenptah described the flight of the enemy in exaggerated terms.

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[1] *COS* 2.2B:17.

> Their leading troops were left behind,
> Their legs made no stand except to flee,
> Their archers abandoned their bows,
> The hearts of their runners grew weak as they sped,
> They loosened their waterskins, cast them down,
> Their packs were untied, thrown away.
> The vile chief, the Libyan foe,
> Fled in the deep of the night alone,
> No plume on his head, his feet unshod,
> His wives were carried off from his presence,
> His food supplies were snatched away,
> He had no drinking water to sustain him.
> The gaze of his brothers was fierce to slay him,
> His officers fought among each other,
> Their tents were fired, burnt to ashes,
> All his goods were food for the troops.[3]

Reliefs commonly depict the flight of the enemy before the pharaoh. In a relief of Seti I attacking a group of Hittites, the enemy is seen turning away from the pharaoh and fleeing the battle (fig. 5.1).[4] The flight of the enemy was particularly ideologically beneficial for the Egyptians if they were able to spread news of the power of the pharaoh; one relief of Seti I says that "All who escaped from the tips of his fingers [t]ell of his strength to distant foreign lands, (this) being the strength of his father Amon 'who decreed [for] you valor and victory over every foreign land'" (fig. 5.7).[5] Ramesses II also delighted to show fleeing enemies, such as a relief at Luxor depicting the battle of Qadesh showing Hittite chariots fleeing into the city of

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[2] Davies, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Nineteenth Dynasty*, 67; also *RITA* 2.3A:7.

[3] *AEL* 2:74; also *ANET*, 377; *ARE* 3:260; "Triumph-Hymn of Merenptah, Cairo and Karnak," in *RITA* 4.Merneptah.3AB:12.

[4] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 34.

[5] Ibid., 7, pl. 3.

Qadesh.[6] A relief from Beit El-Wali shows a larger than life Ramesses II chasing after fleeing Nubian troops, who are falling over themselves and running with their backs to the pharaoh; to the far left of the picture a woman seems to be accepting home an injured man while a child runs out of the picture, perhaps to tell the bad news of the defeat.[7]

Only a few places record Egyptians fleeing. Ramesses II referred to his troops who "quailed" before the enemy at Qadesh.[8] Sesostris III recorded in a boundary stela the negative effects of retreating.

> For he who is quiet after attack, he is making the enemy's heart strong. Aggression is bravery; retreat is vile. He who is driven from his boundary is a true back-turner, since the Nubian only has to hear to fall at a word: answering him makes him retreat. One is aggressive to him and he shows his back; retreat and he becomes aggressive.[9]

5.1.2. Hittite

Mursili II recounted that "Uḫḫaziti offered me no opposition: he fled before me and crossed the sea to the islands. And there he stayed. But the whole land of Arzawa fled."[10] Later, when he was besieging Puranda, Tapalazunauli fled from the siege with his family; Mursili II's troops captured his family but Tapalazunauli fled alone.[11]

5.1.3. Early Mesopotamian

A group of enemies is reported to have fled from Shu-Sin, but he destroyed the cities where they had fled.[12] In another case, Utu-hegal defeated Tirigan, the Gutian king, who tried to flee on foot to save his

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[6] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:84; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 5; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 288.

[7] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:165; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 8; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 261.

[8] *RITA* 2.3B:17.

[9] Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt*, 45 (Berlin Musuem 1157); also *AEL* 1:119

[10] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 50 (*CTH* 61.I.A); also *COS* 2.16:85.

[11] *COS* 2.16:86 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[12] RIME 3.2:304, E3.2.1.4.3, iv.2–7.

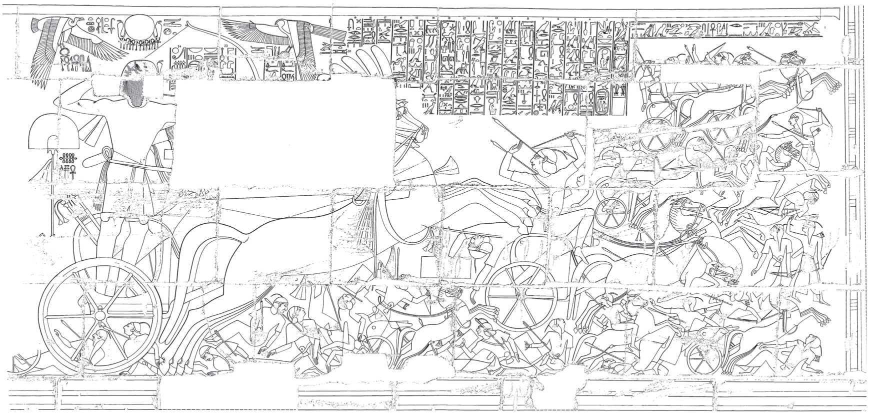

Fig. 5.1. Enemy fleeing before Seti I. Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 34. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

life. At first he was successful, but the people of Dabrum (where he was hiding), handed him over to Utu-hegal.[13] Buqaqum reported to Zimri-Lim that an attack resulted in the naked flight of the defeated remnant (ARM 26.482).

5.1.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian kings delighted to show their foes fleeing.[14] Sometimes this flight was portrayed neutrally, such as when Tiglath-pileser I reported that Marduk-nadin-ahhe had fought against him, but when he was defeated he simply retreated to his own land.[15] However, in most cases the flight is described negatively (even when the flight succeeds in saving the enemy's life). Sometimes fleeing troops were described as feminine, such as the letter to Sargon II from Sennacherib describing the Urartians as trembling and being silent "like women" (SAA 1.32).[16] They were also described using terms from the animal world.[17] An enemy king fleeing by himself was a common motif; in this example Sennacherib reported that he was not able to find the fleeing Merodach-baladan.

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[13] RIME 2:286–87, E2.13.6.4, 103–123.

[14] For more examples, see Chapman, *Gendered Language of Warfare*, 33–38; Marta Rivaroli and Lorenzo Verderama, "To Be a Non-Assyrian," in van Soldt, *Ethnicity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, 300–301; Stefan Zawadzki, "Depicting Hostile Rulers in the Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in Gaspa, *From Source to History*, 768–70.

[15] Frame, "Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," 129–31.

[16] Chapman, *Gendered Language of Warfare*, 48–49; Claudia D. Bergmann, "'We Have Seen the Enemy, and He Is Only a "She"': The Portrayal of Warriors as Women,"

> Moreover, he, (that) evildoer, saw the disturbance from afar and fear fell upon him. He abandoned all of his troops and fled to the land Guzummānu.… I pursued him to the land Guzummānu and sent (my) warriors into the midst of swamps and marshes. For five days they sought him out, but his (hiding) place could not be found. I gathered all together the rest of his horses and troops who *were weary*, (and) who had fled like deer instead of going with him, from the midst of the open country and plain.[18]

In his eighth campaign, Sargon killed an enemy king and forced the enemy to flee. "As for him, I surrounded him in his own encampment, I shot his team of horses from under him with spears and arrows. To save his life, he abandoned his chariot, mounted a mare, and fled in full view of his troops." The Urartian enemy fled to Mount U'aush, where "their horses choked the chasms and mountain gullies while they, like ants in distress, took whatever difficult paths were open to them."[19] In Sennacherib's eighth campaign, the king of Elam and the king of Babylon fled before him.

> (As for) him, Umman-menanu (Ḫumban-menanu), the king of the land Elam, along with the king of Babylon (and) the sheikhs of Chaldea who marched at his side, terror of doing battle with me overwhelmed them like *alû*-demons. They abandoned their tents and, in order to save their lives, they trampled the corpses of their troops as they pushed on. Their hearts throbbed like the pursued young of pigeons, they passed their urine hotly, (and) released their excrement inside their chariots. I ordered my chariots (and) horses to pursue them. Wherever they caught (them), they killed with the sword the runaways amongst them, who had fled for (their) lives.[20]

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in *Writing and Reading War: Rhetoric, Gender, and Ethics in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, ed. Brad E. Kelle and Frank Ritchel Ames, SymS 42 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 129–42.

[17] Richardson, "Mesopotamia and the 'New' Military History," 50–51.

[18] RINAP 3.2:295–96, 213, 26, 34–34.

[19] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 798–99; also *COS* 4.42:204–5.

[20] RINAP 3.1:184, 22, vi.24–35.

A relief from Assurnasirpal II (BM 124538) depicts three enemy high-class men swimming in a river to flee from Assyrian archers; two of them are blowing into their goat skins to keep them afloat.[21] Another relief from Assurnasirpal II (BM 124559) includes enemy horsemen fleeing from Assyrian chariots. A set of reliefs from Sennacherib shows a group of non-Assyrians (most likely from Tyre or Sidon) fleeing their city in boats.[22]

5.1.5. Later Empires

Due to the paucity of warfare narratives, only a few records of the flight of the enemy appear in Babylonian and Persian texts. Darius recounted that Nabintabaira, the king of Babylon, fled; the Persian king followed him back to Babylon and killed him there.[23]

5.1.6. West Semitic

Flight appears often in the Old Testament. After a sortie from Samaria was successful, Ben-Hadad led the flight from the battlefield on horseback (1 Kgs 20:20). When the Moabites were defeated by Jehoram and Jehoshaphat, they fled, and the Israelites continued killing them as they fled (2 Kgs 3:24). YHWH caused the Arameans to hear a (nonexistent) advancing army, leading the Arameans to flee the field of battle and leave their possessions behind (2 Kgs 7:3–8). After the Judeans lost to the Israelites at Beth-Shemesh, the Judean troops fled to their own homes (2 Kgs 14:12).

5.2. Plundering and Prisoners

> Therefore, when in chariot fighting more than ten chariots are captured, reward those who take the first. Replace the enemy’s flags and banners with your own, mix the captured chariots with yours, and mount them. Treat the captives well, and care for them.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 2.18–19

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[21] For a discussion contrasting this river crossing by fleeing enemy with an ordered river crossing by Assyrians, see Dominique Collon, “Examples of Ethnic Diversity on Assyrian Reliefs,” in van Soldt, *Ethnicity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, 67.

[22] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 30, 38–40, nos. 30–31 (Or.Dr.IV.7–8).

[23] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 144 (DB §§19–20).

> When you conquer territory, divide the profits.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 7.14

The most prominent result of battle was that plunder and prisoners were available for seizure by the victorious army, who often emphasized the vastness of the wealth they acquired.[24] Plunder was commonly given to the gods, to the king, to allies, and to the troops. One important aspect of the use of prisoners has already been discussed earlier in §3.3.2, on mustering foreign troops, as prisoners were commonly enlisted into the army of the victors. This section will focus on plunder taken immediately after a battle, though the difference between plunder and tribute is often difficult to determine. The treatment of divine images and temples as plunder will be studied below in §5.6, on political and religious results of conquest.

5.2.1. Egyptian

Pharaohs often emphasized the grandness and magnitude of the plunder they captured from their enemies.[25] Thutmose III described the plunder he received from enemies in the south in grandiose terms. "If one were to catalogue (it) event by event they would be more than millions and tens of thousands, more than the grains of sand on the shore."[26] After a battle against the Hittites, Ramesses II includes this summary of his action: "A bull who fights for his frontiers and who seizes upon rebels; he has [not] allowed (even one) escapee, he has left none (over)."[27] The Old Testament records that Shishak took much plunder from Jerusalem, including from the temple of YHWH (1 Kgs 14:25–26).

Prisoners were often transported while bound.[28] The motif of the bound prisoner is common in Egyptian reliefs (figs. 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, and

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[24] For a general look at plundering in the ancient Near East, see Elgavish, "Division of the Spoils of War"; Richardson, "Mesopotamia and the 'New' Military History," 29–33.

[25] For more on plunder and prisoners in Egypt, see David Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare in Dyn. XVIII," *JARCE* 11 (1974): 53–68; Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt*, 109–23.

[26] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 10 (Armant Stela).

[27] "The Battle against Dapur: Luxor Forecourt and Ramesseum," *RITA* 2.19:46.

[28] For a study of the discrepancy between the idea that the captives carried plunder to the pharaoh and the motif of a bound prisoner who could not carry any-

5.11).[29] Not only are the prisoners bound individually, but sometimes they are tied together by a rope that is attached to each of their necks.[30] Ahmose recorded that Nubians were "carried off in neck constraints."[31] One variation of this theme occurs in a relief of Seti I that shows him picking up several prisoners in each of his arms.[32] A scribal parody in P.Lansing describes a female prisoner fainting and a soldier being forced to carry her on his shoulders, causing him to lose his belongings to theft.[33]

The spoils of war belonged to the pharaoh. To illustrate this basic fact, Ramesses III said the following: "I settled their leaders in strongholds bearing my name, I added to them chief bowmen and great ones of tribes, branded and made into slaves (*ḥmw*), stamped with my name—their wives and children being treated likewise."[34] A relief of Ramesses III depicts the branding of prisoners, with an Egyptian official holding the right hand of the prisoner and branding their right shoulder.[35]

Although much of the plunder would have remained with the pharaoh, an important destination for a significant portion of the plunder was the gods. One relief of Thutmose III shows him presenting to Amun over two hundred different items from his Asiatic conquests.[36] In a temple to Ptah, Thutmose III described the plunder he brought to the temple. "I filled his temple with every good thing, with oxen, geese, incense, wine, offerings of all sorts of fruit."[37] After the battle of Qadesh, Ramesses II

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thing, see Vanessa Davies, "The Treatment of Foreigners in Seti's Battle Reliefs," *JEA* 98 (2012): 73–85.

[29] For a list of reliefs that portray actively binding the enemy, see Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 155; for an example from Merenptah, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:58b; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 295.

[30] *ANEP*, 1, 4, 14, 17–18, 93, 103, nos. 1, 7, 8, 9, 43, 49–51, 55, 297 (BM EA35714 is a plaster cast of the Narmer Palatte in the Cairo Museum), 314–16; for drawings of all the ways that the enemies are bound in New Kingdom reliefs, see Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 166–68.

[31] *COS* 2.1:6.

[32] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 13.

[33] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 402; also *AEL* 2:172.

[34] Bakir, *Slavery in Pharaonic Egypt*, 110 (P.Harris 1.77.4–6); also *ARE* 4:202; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 123, no. 234; Grandet, *Le Papyrus Harris I*, 1:337; see §3.3.2.1 on the branding of prisoners who were enlisted into the army.

[35] Nelson, "Epigraphic Survey of the Great Temple of Medient Habu," 34.

[36] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:33.

[37] *ARE* 2:246.

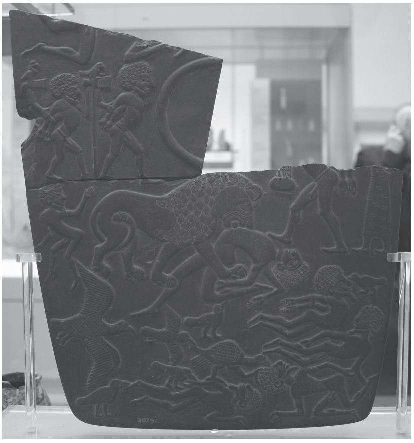

Fig. 5.2. Bound prisoners on the Battlefield Palette. British Museum EA20791 (the smaller fragment is a cast of a piece in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford). Photo courtesy of Einsamer Schütze, Wikimedia Commons.

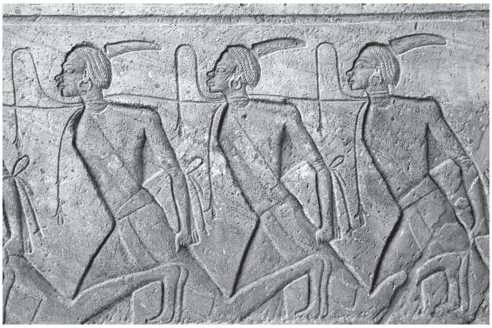

Fig. 5.3. Bound prisoners. Abu Simbel, Egypt. Photo courtesy of JoSchmaltz, Wikimedia Commons.

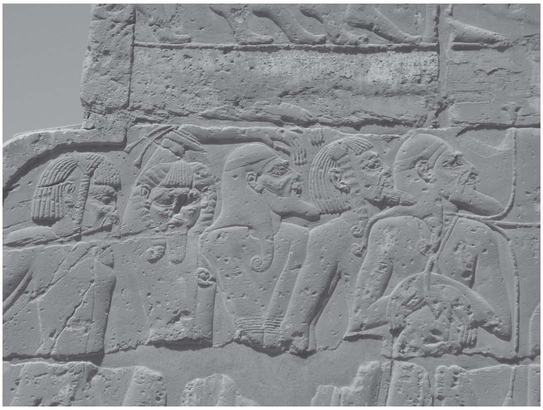

Fig. 5.4. Bound prisoners. Medinet Habu, Egypt. Photo courtesy of Rémih, Wikimedia Commons.

presented prisoners to the gods and stated that they were for the workshops of the temple.[38] In an inscription from Luxor Ramesses II reported to his son that the prisoners who had been captured in Qode were taken to be slaves in the temple.[39] A poetic text praising Merenptah (in P.Anast. 2) proclaimed that "their chieftans are tied as captives in front of you, and you shall soon send them on to your Father, Amun Kamutef, Strong Bull of his Mother."[40] A common refrain in the Victory Stela of Piye is that plunder was "assigned to the endowment of Amon in Karnak."[41]

Pharaoh also gave spoils to the soldiers. The common practice was that the soldiers would present their plunder to the pharaoh, who would then reward them. This was depicted in many reliefs, as far back as the Narmer mace head.[42] Amenhotep II refers to this practice in his account of the ninth year of his reign, listing what he captured first and then recounting that the army captured more and presented that to him. "List of the booty of his majesty alone within this day: living *maryanu*: 17; children of princes: 6; living Asiatics: 68; hands: 123; teams: 7; chariots of silver and gold: 7; *in addition* to all their weapons of warfare; *bulls*: 443; cows: 370; and all (kinds of) cattle, without their limit. Then the army presented very abundant booty, without its limit."[43] The biography of Ahmose, a naval commander, reveals that prisoners were sometimes allotted to military officers.[44] Ahmose was rewarded for specific actions in battle, but this is a practice that might have been introduced by the Hyksos and not practiced before then.[45] A combination of archaeological evidence and a few textual sources also signal that pharaohs sometimes rewarded troops with weapons.[46]

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[38] R.92–93 in *RITA* 2.3C:25; for the relief, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:76; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 285.

[39] "Luxor, Forecourt, W. Wall," *RITA* 2.18:44; for reliefs depicting the pharaoh leading prisoners to a god, see Joachim Śliwa, "Some Remarks concerning Victorious Ruler Representations in Egyptian Art," *FuB* 16 (1974): 111–12; Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pls. 8, 14.

[40] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 141; also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 45.

[41] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 484.

[42] For some examples, see Śliwa, "Some Remarks," 109–10.

[43] *ANET*, 247.

[44] *COS* 2.1:5–7.

[45] Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare," 57.

[46] Sonia Focke, "'His Majesty Saw My Valour': Weapons as Rewards for Feats on

It was apparently an Egyptian custom to collect the hands of those enemies who had been killed, as seen in the reliefs of Ramesses II at Abydos and Ramesses III at Karnak and Medinet Habu (fig. 5.5).[47] It is unlikely that the relief is intended to accurately reflect the number of hands in the pile, but if it was, the number would be around three or four thousand.[48] Ahmose recorded that he gained several hands from various battles.[49] The scribe of Anastasi II praised Merenptah for arriving home in a chariot weighed down with hands.[50] Merenptah claimed he came back with donkeys "laden with the uncircumcised phalli of the country of Libya, together with the hands of every country that was with them."[51] A relief from Tutankhamen depicts soldiers with hands skewered on their spears, while a relief of Seti I depicts two living enemies who lack right hands (fig. 5.6).[52] Another fragmentary relief from Tutankhamen illustrates an Egyptian soldier preparing to cut off the hand of a Nubian chief (who is being crushed by a chariot).[53]

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the Battlefield," in *Warfare and Society in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Stephen O'Brien and Daniel Boatright, BARIS 2583 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2013), 5–18.

[47] R.59–62 in *RITA* 2.3C:23; for pictures from Ramesses II, see *ANEP*, 114, no. 340; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:24–25; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 254, 286; for pictures from Ramesses III of captured hands and phalli see *ANEP*, 118, no. 348; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 147; Shaw, "Battle in Ancient Egypt," 252; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:62a, 118–19; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 308, 312, 319, 322.

[48] This number is based on a pile that is about 70,000 cu. in. (48 x 48 x 30 in.), each hand occupying about 15 cu. in., and a 20 percent reduction to account for space between hands in the pile; my thanks to Graham Krahn for the equation.

[49] *COS* 2.1:5–7.

[50] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 45.

[51] *ARE* 3:247; also "Great Libyan War Inscription, Karnak," *RITA* 4.Merenptah.2:6. It has been suggested that the Egyptians took the phalli of the Libyans rather than the hands because the Egyptians resembled the Libyans and would have given opportunity to unscrupulous Egyptian soldiers to cut off hands of their dead countrymen to gain a reward; since the Libyans were uncircumcised the difference would have been obvious; see Stillman and Tallis, *Armies of the Ancient Near East*, 10.

[52] For hands skewered on spears, see Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 239. The Seti relief is in Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 3.

[53] Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 238; for a study of the relief and more on cutting off of hands in general, see José M. Galán, "Mutilation of Pharaoh's Enemies," in *Egyptian Museum Collections around the World: Studies for the Centennial of the Egyptian Museum*, ed. Mamdouh Eldamaty and Mai Trad (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002), 441–51.

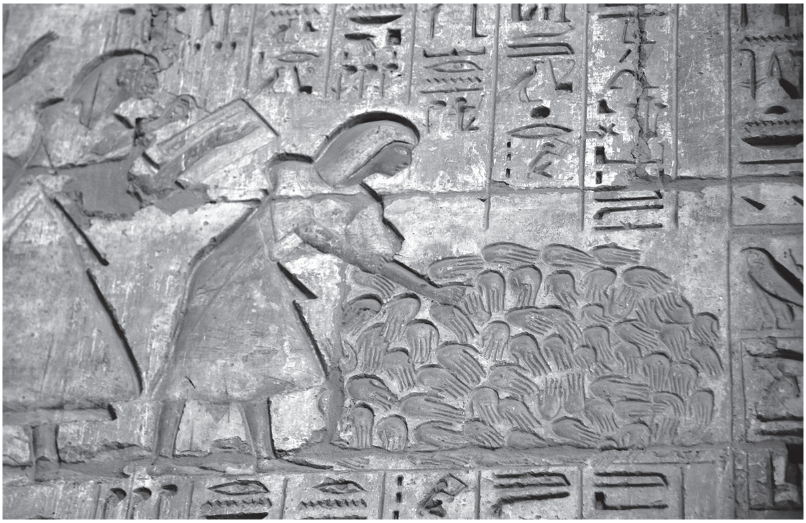

Fig. 5.5. Counting hands in a relief by Ramesses III. Medinet Habu, Egypt. Picture courtesy of Asta/Wikimedia Commons.

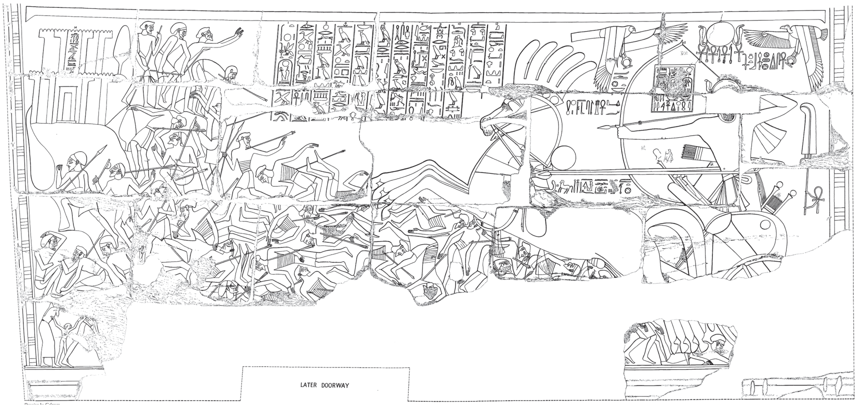

Fig. 5.6. Enemy without hands (far left side of picture). Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, pl. 3. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

Finally, plunder could be given to noncombatants as well. Amenhotep the son of Hapi was a government official (he calls himself a royal scribe and a commander of the elite troops) under Amenhotep III and claimed that, “I filled the serfs with the choicest of the booty whom his majesty captured on the battlefield.” He also said that, “I am the one who reckoned the dispatch of the trophies of the victory of his majesty while I was in front of them."[54]

Not all captives became slaves, as some high-ranking prisoners were brought back to Egypt as hostages to educate them and encourage leadership in other countries in the future that were more open to Egypt.[55] In his sixth campaign Thutmose records an example of this practice. "List of the tribute brought to the glory of his majesty by the princes of Retenu in this year. Now the children of the princes and their brothers were brought to be *hostages* in Egypt. Now, whoever of these princes died, his majesty was accustomed to make his son go to stand in his place."[56]

5.2.2. Hittite

Like all armies of the ancient Near East, the Hittite army took many prisoners after battles.[57] One example of the magnificent amount of plunder is from the annals of Mursili II: "And how many NAM.RA-people I, My Majesty, brought into the royal household, were 66,000 altogether. And how many NAM.RA-people, cattle and sheep the lords of Ḫattuša, the foot-soldiers and charioteers took away, was not to be counted."[58] Sometimes, the prisoners were given to the king. For example, in the quotation above the first item lists the number of captives taken to the royal palace. In the treaty with the men of Ismerika they were told to give captives to the Hittite king after a battle, but were permitted to keep the captured animals.[59] Hattusili I said that he filled his palace with plunder from his second year of campaigns.[60] In one of the substitute king rituals a prisoner of war was placed on the throne as a way to protect the king from misfortune.

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[54] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 94, no. 48.

[55] For more on this, see Diamantis Panagiotopoulos, "Foreigners in Egypt in the Time of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III," in Cline, *Thutmose III*, 399–400.

[56] *ANET*, 239.

[57] Harry A. Hoffner Jr., "The Treatment and Long Term Use of Persons Captured in Battle," in *Recent Developments in Hittite Archaeology and History: Papers in Memory of Hans G. Güterbock*, ed. K. Aslihan Yener and Harry A. Hoffner Jr. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 61–72; Sedat Alp, "Die soziale Klasse der NAM.RA-Leute und ihre hethitische Bezeichnung," *JKF* 1 (1950): 113–35; for an artist's reconstruction of transplantees being herded to a destination between two lines of Hittite soldiers, see Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 38.

[58] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 45 (*KBo* 3.4 rev. III 32′–35′; *CTH* 61.I.A).

[59] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 15–16 (*CTH* 133).

> They anoint the prisoner of war with the oil of kingship, and (the king) speaks thus: "Now this one is king. [I have given] the royal title to this one, I have invested this one with the royal [robe], I have crowned this one with the (royal) cap. Evil signs, short years, short days, notice [this one] and follow this substitute!"… They lead an officer before the prisoner, and he takes him back to his land.[61]

Spoils were also given to the gods. Anitta of Kussar described how he dedicated the spoils of war to the temple. "I furnished the temple of Ḫalmašuitt, the temple of the storm-god, my lord, and the temple of our deity with the goods I brought back from campaign."[62] A Hittite ritual drama depicted the Hittites fighting the enemy (*CTH* 525.2): "They do battle, and the men of Ḫatti defeat them, and take a captive and devote him to the god."[63] Sometimes the troops could take prisoners as plunder, such as recorded in the joint annals of Tudhaliya and Arnuwanda I (*CTH* 143).[64] On one occasion, the Hittite king gave an entire town to his troops: "I took Aripša in battle. [A]nd I left it to the whole of Ḫattuša to pillage."[65] Similar to the quotation from Mursili II at the beginning of this section, Suppiluliuma took a large number of civilian captives to the palace, but those whom the Hittites took as a whole were beyond numbering.[66] The troops of Mursili II who captured the family of the enemy Tapalazunauli were allowed to keep the captives who traveled with the family for themselves.[67] The Hittites sometimes transported entire populations, especially of the Kaska peoples. In one example, Mursili II in his sixth year said he emptied an entire region. "The Kaškaean town, that the mountain region of Ašḫarpaya occupied, I defeated and took it. But the mountain (region) of Ašḫarpaya I made empty."[68]

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[60] *ANEHST*, 220 (*CTH* 4.II.A).

[61] Daniel Schwemer, "The Ancient Near East," in *The Cambridge History of Magic and Witchcraft in the West: From Antiquity to the Present*, ed. David J. Collins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 37 (*KUB* 24.5 + 9.13 + *FHL* 125 obverse 19′–26′; *CTH* 419.A).

[62] *ANEHST*, 218; also *COS* 1.72:183 (*CTH* 1.A).

[63] Hoffner, "Treatment and Long Term Use," 63.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 46 (*KBo* 4.4 rev. IV 12–13; *CTH* 61.II.5.B).

[66] *COS* 1.74:190 (*CTH* 40).

[67] *COS* 2.16:86 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

Keeping plunder after a battle was a way to convince allies to fight with the Hittites.[69] In a treaty with Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna, Tudhaliya II allowed him to keep plunder when he defeated an enemy. "Sunashshura will take the movable property, civilian captives, and troops of a city which he conquers. No one may challenge him."[70] Sharri-Kushuh, the brother of the Hittite king Mursili II, promised the Ugaritic king Niqmaddu II that he could keep whatever plunder he acquired if he attacked Tette.[71] Hattusili I wrote to Tunip-Teshub of Tikunani, his vassal, and encouraged him to go to war. "My campaign has begun (lit. my road is open). So you should be a man with respect to the man of Ḫaḫḫum. Devour his food rations like a dog! The oxen which you take shall be your own. The sheep and goats which you take shall be your own. Be a man with respect to him! I from this side, and you from that side."[72]

However, they were not given a free hand to take whatever captives they wanted. When a civilian captive taken in a battle fled from Hatti to the land of one of its allies, treaties required that the captive be sent back to the Hittite king by the vassal king.[73] However, this demand was not mutual, as the Hittites were not required to give fugitive civilian captives back to vassal kings.[74] In the case of Manapa-Tarhunta, Mursili II required him to give all his civilian captives he had acquired before he could become a vassal of the Hittite empire.[75] The expected actions of a vassal after a battle were formalized in one treaty between an unknown Hittite king and a group of small villages.

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[68] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 48 (*KBo* 3.4 rev. III 43′-44′; *CTH* 61.I.A).

[69] For more on giving plunder to allies, see Elgavish, "Division of the Spoils of War," 256–57.

[70] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 21 (*CTH* 41; 131).

[71] Ibid., 126 (RS 17.132).

[72] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 78.

[73] E.g., Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 39 (*CTH* 49).

[74] E.g., ibid., 71 (*CTH* 67); however this return of fugitives was reciprocal in treaties between equals, such as that between the Hittites and the Egyptians in ibid., 98–100 (*CTH* 91).

[75] Ibid., 83 (*CTH* 69).

> [And when] you march […], after the campaign you shall not violate the wife or daughter of a man, [nor] shall you injure [them]. After the campaign no one shall steal a man, woman, son, daughter, slave, slave girl, ox, sheep, [horse], mule, ass, silver, gold, […], bronze, or copper implements. And you shall seize a refugee [or a fugitive] who [comes] to you, whether he is a free man, a slave, or a slave girl, and [send] him to My Majesty. You shall not sell him to anyone—not [to] the enemy nor to [another] land. And you shall not turn his eyes [to the mountains. If] you hear an evil word from anyone, whether it is of […] or of an enemy, you shall seize [the one responsible for] the word of hostility and send him to My Majesty.[76]

The noncombatant prisoners were referred to with the term *arnuwala-* (NAM.RA), while combatants were called *appant-*, the passive participle of the verb "to seize" (^{LÚ}ŠU.DAB), but the distinction blurred after capture until all captives were eventually called *arnuwala-*. Captives were ranked more highly than slaves and it appears that they were never held in camps.[77] Many of the *arnuwala-* were used as servants, but they could also own land (as seen in the Hittite laws).[78] Some prisoners deserved extra care. The king commanded Kassu to send an important prisoner (Marruwa) to him under guard of an officer (*HKM* 13; *CTH* 186). Apparently Kassu did not do so, because another letter from the king threatened him with blindness if he did not obey immediately (*HKM* 14; *CTH* 186).

Bringing prisoners back to Hittite lands did not always end well, however. Tudhaliya II returned a large group of captives, but they later rebelled against him.[79] Another danger of capturing prisoners is that they might bring diseases with them. The most famous case of this is found in the Plague Prayers of Mursili, who asked the Storm God of Hatti to remove the plague that had come to Hatti through the prisoners of war from Egypt.

> At that time too the Storm-god of Hatti, my lord, by his verdict caused my father to prevail, and he defeated the infantry and the chariotry of Egypt and beat them. But when the prisoners of war who had been captured were led back to Hatti, a plague broke out among the prisoners of war, and [they began] to die. When the prisoners of war were carried off

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[76] Ibid., 165 (*CTH* 146).

[77] Hoffner, "Treatment and Long Term Use," 61–62.

[78] Ibid., 63–64.

[79] Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 95.

> to Hatti, the prisoners of war brought the plague into Hatti. From that day on people have been dying in Hatti. When I found the aforementioned tablet dealing with Egypt, I inquired about it to the god through an oracle saying: "Has this matter been brought about by the Storm-god of Hatti because the men of Egypt and the men of Hatti had been put under oath by the Storm-god of Hatti?"[80]

5.2.3. Early Mesopotamia

Plundering was common in early Mesopotamia, often on a magnificent scale.[81] The kings of Sargon's dynasty took many captives; Rimush claimed to take 54,016 men in one campaign. As if expecting disbelief, he immediately added "By the gods Šamaš and Ilaba I swear that (these) are not falsehoods, (but) are indeed true."[82] Plundering was also an expected part of the result of a battle. Zimri-Adad complained that a troop of five thousand men went out on campaign, but an enemy spy had discovered their attack. Zimri-Adad summed up their failure in terms of plunder: "How is it possible that 5,000 men came back empty-handed?"[83]

The prisoners were often given to the king. Ibal-Adad wrote to Zimri-Lim that he was sending "three slaves as my lord's share of (spoils; *ḫuzbātum*)" (ARM 28.51 = Sasson 3.3.b.i.5 = *COS* 4.68:251).[84] Tarim-shakim (a counselor of Yasmah-Adad) reported that one thousand three hundred captured men would be assigned to the palace (ARM 5.27 = LAPO 17.627 = Sasson 1.3.a.iii.2a). Bunu-Ishtar of Kurda rebuked his ally Hadnu-rabi of Qattara for keeping Zimri-Lim's share of the spoil of a recent battle (*OBTR* 5 = Sasson 1.3.a.ii.4). Samadahum wrote to Yasmah-

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[80] Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 58–59 (*CTH* 378.II); for more on the plague among the Hittites, see Jörg Klinger, "Krankheit und Krieg im Spannungsfeld zwischen mythischer und realer Katastrophe," in *Disaster and Relief Management/Katastrophen und ihre Bewaltigung*, ed. A. Berlejung, FAT 81 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012), 471–97.

[81] On plundering in early Mesopotamia, see I. J. Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," *JNES* 32 (1973): 70–98; Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 3–4; Laurent Hebenstreit, "The Sumerian Spoils of War During Ur III," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 373–80; Agnès Garcia-Ventura, "Ur III Biopolitics: Reflections on the Relationship between War and Work Force Management," in Nadali, *Other Face of the Battle*, 7–23.

[82] RIME 2:48–49, E2.1.2.4, 64–78.

[83] Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 27 (ARM 27.141).

[84] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 196.

Adad about the king's portion (*zittum*) of the spoils. Since the king was not at home, Samadahum did not immediately send the king his portion of the slaves (four slaves). Samadahum himself encountered difficulty receiving his share of the plunder from the section-chiefs, who then gave him six slaves that should have gone to the soldiers. Samadahum returned these slaves to the soldiers, and then called the officers to tell them that if they did not give plunder to whom it was due then they would be breaking an oath to the gods and to the king (ARM 2.13 = LAPO 17.457 = Sasson 1.3.a.ii.1).

Ishme-Dagan wrote to his brother Yasmah-Adad that he wanted certain captives (a scribe and a physician), but the other captives Yasmah-Adad could keep (though any that Yasmah-Adad did not want should be sent to Ishme-Dagan) (ARM 26.269 = ARM 4.63 = LAPO 18.1034 = Sasson 3.6.c.ii).

The king could give his portion to others. Zimri-Lim promised to send a female musician to his sister Liqtum from the spoils of a battle (ARM 10.140 = LAPO 18.1184 = Sasson 1.3.a.iii.2b). One letter from Ishme-Dagan promised to give out a gold ring and a gold disk to his generals (ARM 4.74 = LAPO 17.541 = Sasson 3.3.a.iv.2). A letter from Azzu-ena, a woman of Ashala, to Mutu-hadki asked him to fulfill a previous promise he had made to provide her with a slave girl to help with the grinding at the millstone after he had acquired booty. She attributed the victory in battle to the god speaking: "Now, the god has spoken; there was nobody to hinder you; now the booty that is before you is indeed plentiful."[85]

Zimri-Lim often wrote to his queen Shibtu about female captives and their role in the palace. He asked her to care for Ibal-Adad, the daughter of the king of Ashlakka, when she became part of the spoils of battle (ARM 10.124 = LAPO 18.1170 = Sasson 5.5.b.i.3). Shibtu appears to have been in charge of the high-ranking female prisoners, as another letter records a similar directive: "On the tablet of captives that I have sent to you, the priestesses of Kulmish and the priestess of other gods are listed separately on a different tablet.… Give them clothes to wear" (ARM 10.123 = LAPO 18.1169 = Sasson 5.5b.i.2).[86] In another letter, he prohibited her from picking women for a choir because he would direct women from a future group of captives to her for the choir. Instead, this group would be weavers (ARM 10.125 = LAPO 18.1167 = Sasson 1.3.a.iii.1). Elsewhere he reported to her that he was sending to her captives (several of whom were *ugbabtum*-priestesses) to be weavers. Shibtu was to pick out the thirty most attractive female weavers so they could be trained to be musicians under the direction of Warad-ilishu. Their food ration was to be carefully watched so their appearance would not be damaged (ARM 10.126 = LAPO 18.1166 = Sasson 1.3.a.iii.1).

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[85] Dalley, Walker, and Hawkins, *Old Babylonian Tablets from Tell Al Rimah*, 131–32, no. 160.

[86] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 145.

Prisoners given to the king did not usually become slaves, but there were exceptions.[87] The many administrative records from the House of Prisoners from Uruk during a rebellion against Samsu-iluna demonstrate that prisoners of war could become slaves. The House of Prisoners seems to have acted not so much as a prison but as a centralized location from which prisoners of war could be distributed to various groups and individuals, as shown by the many texts recording the destination of the prisoners.[88]

Dedicating plunder and prisoners to the gods was also a common practice. In a brief inscription, Rimush recorded that he dedicated his spoils to Enlil: "When he conquered Elam and Paraḫšum, he took away 30 minas of gold, 3.600 minas of copper and 300 male and female slaved and dedicated (them) to the god Enlil."[89] Many bowls and vases have been found in Nippur with inscriptions that describe them as part of this dedication to Enlil: "To the god Enlil, Rīmuš, king of the world, when he conquered Elam and Paraḫšum, dedicated (this vessel) from the booty of Elam."[90] Rimush made a statue of himself after a battle and "dedicated it to the god Enlil *for his well-being*."[91] Ur-Nammu gave some plunder to the god Enlil, while the rest went to his troops. "I took as booty … and forty-five (plus) asses. I brought (the booty) to the god Enlil, my lord, in Nippur, (and) marked it for him (Enlil). The remainder I presented as a gift to my troops."[92] A Mari text describes a donation of a captive to a god. "Kunziya, a young girl, daughter of {the man} Zazanaya, captive from (the town of)

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[87] Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," 81, 90–95.

[88] Andrea Seri, *The House of Prisoners: Slavery and State in Uruk during the Revolt against Samsu-Iluna*, SANER 2 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013).

[89] RIME 2:54–55, E2.1.2.6, 131–144.

[90] RIME 2:62, E2.1.2.11, 1–13.

[91] RIME 2:49, E2.1.2.4, 79–86.

[92] RIME 3.2:66, E3.2.1.1.29, vi′.1′–14′; also *COS* 2.138D:388.

Ṣidqani, is offered {to the god Nawar of Nagar; unit led by Manum} for milling grain."[93]

Often plunder was given to the soldiers.[94] Ishi-Adad of Qatna wrote to his son-in-law Yasmah-Adad about spoils: "Feed your troops spoils so they will bless you."[95] An official recommended to Zimri-Lim that he not fight in a battle but reward those who fight well (A.1975 = Sasson 3.4.a.iii. note). One letter reported that every soldier had taken a prisoner (ARM 26.357 = Sasson 3.4.b.iii.note). Aqba-hammu, the ruler of Karana (al Rimah) and subject of Hammurabi, told his wife Iltani that he had conquered Shirwun and that the troops were enjoying the plunder. "Speak to Iltani: thus Aqba-hammu. I have brought (back?) to my side all the land of Širwun. All the troops have been enjoying the booty, and I am about to return to the homeland in a full …: rejoice!"[96] Ila-Hatnu, the king of an unknown city in northern Syria during the eighteenth century, told Till-Abnu (a king of Leilan), that the men captured by his soldiers were taken during war. If they had been taken during peace, then they would have had to have been returned.

> Concerning the men from Apum my brother previously wrote to me. I interrogated the men who caught them, and they said as follows: "It was in [war] we caught them!," and I said to my [brother's] retainer as follows: "Let them [… swear] an oath; the men (now) slaves—all who were caught—they did [not] catch them in peacetime." This is what I said to my brother's retainer, and (even) if these men had been [here …], I would not have had them led to my brother. A soldier caught them as is the right of soldiers, and they have disposed of them there.[97]

Allies and vassals often received plunder from battle. After defeating Qabara, Dadusha gave what was left in the land after the initial plundering to Shamshi-Adad.[98] In a battle against Sutean tribesmen, Hammurabi rewarded each of the soldiers of Mari (an ally who fought with him) who brought back prisoners with "a silver ring of two shekels and a shirt each."[99] However, dividing plunder between allies could lead to diplomatic difficulties. In a letter to Zimri-Lim, Yasim-El described such a situation in which Himdiya, the military leader of Atamrum, claimed that all the prisoners of war had been ransomed and released or had been designated for the gods of his lord (Atamrum?). When Yasim-El saw the Babylonians with prisoners of war, he insisted that Himdiya release them, but Himdiya said that it would be improper to take them from the Babylonians (ARM 26.436).

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[93] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 239 (M.11266); portions marked with {} are from M.6765+.

[94] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 405–8.

[95] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 187 (ARM 5.16 = LAPO 17.443 = Sasson 3.2.c.vi).

[96] Dalley, Walker, and Hawkins, *Old Babylonian Tablets from Tell Al Rimah*, 69–70, no. 72, also Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 211.

[97] Eidem, *Royal Archives from Tell Leilan*, 127–28 (Tell Leilan letter 58).

[98] *ANEHST*, 99.

As in the Hittite sources, the earliest records from Mesopotamia appear to group prisoners into two groups: the civilian captives who are not bound upon being captured and are called *nam-ra-ag* (similar to the NAM.RA of Hittite) and the captured warriors who are bound and are called LÚ.KÁR (parallel to the Hittite $^{\text{LÚ}}$ŠU.DAB).[100] It appears that prisoners of war were not consistently referred to as such after they were captured, but became known by other terms, such as their occupation. For example, in a receipt for the purchase of workers, they are initially referred to as "female prisoners of war," but at the end of the text they are called "female weavers," which is what they would be known as in the future.[101]

Large scale forced deportation happened occasionally in early Mesopotamia. The forced deportation would have disrupted group dynamics (including ancestor worship) while providing labor for the victors.[102] After they rebelled against his rule, Shu-Sin moved the population of Simanum to a town near Nippur.

> He settled the enemy people, his booty, (namely) Simānum, for the god Enlil and the goddess Ninlil, on the frontier of Nippur, (and) built for them [a town]. He set (them) apart for them (Enlil and Ninlil). The god of their town was Šū-Sîn. Since the days of decreeing the fates, no king has established a town for the god Enlil and the goddess Ninlil on the

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[99] Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 36 (ARM 27.161).

[100] Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," 79.

[101] Garcia-Ventura, "Ur III Biopolitics," 15–17 (*BCT* 2, 206).

[102] Leiticia Rovira, "'Share Them Out …': On the Mass Deportation of People according to the Texts of Mari (Eighteenth Century BC)," in Nadali, *Other Face of the Battle*, 25–27; Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 311–25.

> frontier of Nippur, with the people he had captured; (but) Šū-Šîn, mighty king, king of Ur, king of the four quarters, [established] Simānum.[103]

The Mari texts provide a few examples of large population transfers after a defeat. Yarim-Adad told Zimri-Lim about the forced deportation of the country of Mutiabal: "They [deported] the entire population, destroyed their [houses] and set fire."[104] Ishme-Dagan told his brother about one of these cases of forced deportation.

> With regard to the country of Šušarrâ, the subject of your letter, Izar-Lîm will tell you that country is in confusion and we are unable to administer it. Lidâya the Turukku and the Turukkeans who are with him, those who have moved into the country, began the hostilities and annihilated two cities. I went to help them, and they penetrated the mountains.
>
> We have deliberated on this. Since it is impossible to administer this country, I have deported its inhabitants and moved them, servers and maids alike, to the country of Arrapha and the country of Qabrâ. The troops will withdraw to the inland regions of the country.[105]

A letter from Yasmah-Adad to his brother Ishme-Dagan described some of the specific of forced deportation.

> Share them out.… You will find fields for them to cultivate. All of those who are not equipped and cannot (therefore) farm shall join the auxiliary troops. These are the ones (on the other hand) who shall truly be auxiliary troops: they must regularly receive rations of grain, oil, and clothing from the palace. Therefore, (their former affluence) shall have been restored (to them) so that here they will not again consider destroying their assets and so that we do not have to exercise an act of authority or take their fields and homes from them.[106]

In the third year of Zimri-Lim, Ilushu-nasir requested a group of deportees from the king: "The city of Qaṭṭunân is not full of camps; if my Lord pleases, among the deportees from Suhûm whom my Lord forced to leave, may my Lord transport (here) an entire city, so that from now on this city shall become full of camps."[107] Another text refers to mixing populations: "The inhabitants of Alatrû whom you have deported, make them enter the suburbs of Nihriya and mix them with its inhabitants."[108]

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[103] RIME 3.2:298–99, E3.2.1.4.1, iv.34–v.11; for other examples of population movement after battle, see Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," 91–92.

[104] Rovira, "Share Them Out…," 26 (ARM 26.365).

[105] Ibid., 28 (ARM 4.25 = LAPO 17.531).

[106] Ibid., 29 (ARM 4.86 = LAPO 17.772 = Sasson 6.1.c.i.2).

Guarding and feeding prisoners was always a problem. Several third-millennium reliefs depict captives with their hands bound either behind their backs or in front of them.[109] Yasim-El described for Zimri-Lim the procedure for dealing with several recent prisoners of war. Atamrum had caught two hundred prisoners of war and divided them among his allies (perhaps in proportion to the number of troops each of the allies sent).[110] Fifty-nine of them were to be sent to the palace to serve because it was short-staffed. Four men were to escort the prisoners of war to the king, and Yasim-El requested that these four men be sent back quickly.[111] In another letter, Shamshi-Adad rebuked his son Yasmah-Adad for sending too few troops to guard prisoners and take plunder.

> Mashiya has come to me. You have dispatched with him only 30 men to guard the booty! Thirty men for guarding a booty of a thousand (prisoners), for what is this sufficient? Let [x] hundred troops, sons of the land, take supplies for 15 days. Make them ready to go with La'um and dispatch them quickly to me to guard the booty. I do not allow you any delay for these troops to arrive.[112]

Captives could be ransomed if enough money was provided (A.1286 = Sasson 1.3.a.iv.1).[113] Prisoners could also be exchanged between sides (ARM 28.161 = Sasson 1.3.a.iv.2). One letter even refers to ransoming the body of a dead soldier (LAPO 17.456 = A.3552 = *COS* 4.50:230). Reliefs from Ebla depict the victors of a battle picking up the heads of the defeated enemies and putting them into bags, perhaps as a way to count the number of the dead. Although evidence for this practice is clear from Egypt, this was uncommon in Mesopotamia.[114]

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[107] Ibid., 32 (ARM 27.7).

[108] Ibid., 32 (A.4513 = LAPO 17.312).

[109] For an example with hands bound behind their backs, see Strommenger, *Five Thousand Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 114 ("Victory Stela of a King of Akkad" [Louvre]). Their hands are bound in front of them in a third-millennium stela from the region of Nasiriyya (Iraq Museum), see ibid., pl. 118.

[110] Elgavish, "The Division of the Spoils of War," 255–56.

[111] ARM 26.408; the first part of this letter is summarized above, ch. 3, Mustering Troops.

[112] *ANEHST*, 117 (ARM 1.43 = LAPO 17.492).

[113] For more on ransoming prisoners, see Amalia Catagnoti, "In the Aftermath of the War: The Truce between Ebla and Mari (ARET XVI 30) and the Ransom of Prisoners," *RA* 106 (2013): 45–63; Dominique Charpin, "Le prix de rachat des captifs d'après les arachives paléo-babyloniennes," in *Studies in Economic and Social History*

5.2.4. Assyrian

Like the other empires in the ancient Near East, the Assyrian kings captured considerable amounts of plunder (fig. 5.7).[115] One of the most impressive examples is in Sargon's account of his eighth campaign when he recounted the tremendous plunder he received from Musasir.[116] Prisoners are commonly depicted in Assyrian reliefs, often bound both at the hand and feet and sometimes to each other via a rope attached to each prisoner.[117] A relief from Tiglath-pileser III depicts prisoners with hands bound behind their backs; their chests are protruding, perhaps to indicate the difficult position they are being forced into.[118] The taking of foreign items (especially luxury items) enhanced the Assyrian empire through the visual demonstration of Assyrian superiority.[119] As in other places, the plunder mostly went to the king, who decided where it went (fig. 5.8). After Esarhaddon built his palace Eshgalshiddudua, he described one of

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of the Ancient Near East in Memory of Péter Vargyas, ed. Zoltán Csabai, ANEMS 2 (Budapest: L'Harmattan, 2014).

[114] Alfonso Archi, "Two Heads for the King of Ebla," in *Boundaries of the Ancient Near Eastern World: A Tribute to Cyrus H. Gordon*, ed. Meir Lubetski, Claire Gottlieb, and Sharon R. Keller, JSOTSup 273 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 393–95.

[115] For detailed discussion and charts of all Assyrian plunder recorded, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 125–66, 266–92; see also the charts in de Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 200–204.

[116] *COS* 4.42:212–13; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 809; for a discussion of the exotic plunder collected by the Assyrian kings, see Julian Reade, "The Assyrians as Collectors: From Accumulation to Synthesis," in Frame, *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea*, 255–68.

[117] See *ANEP*, 5, no. 10 (BM 124928); Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 36.

[118] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 23–24 (BM 118880).

[119] Marian H. Feldman, "Assyrian Representations of Booty and Tribute as a Self-Portrayal of Empire," in *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, ed. Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritchel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright, AIL 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 135–50.

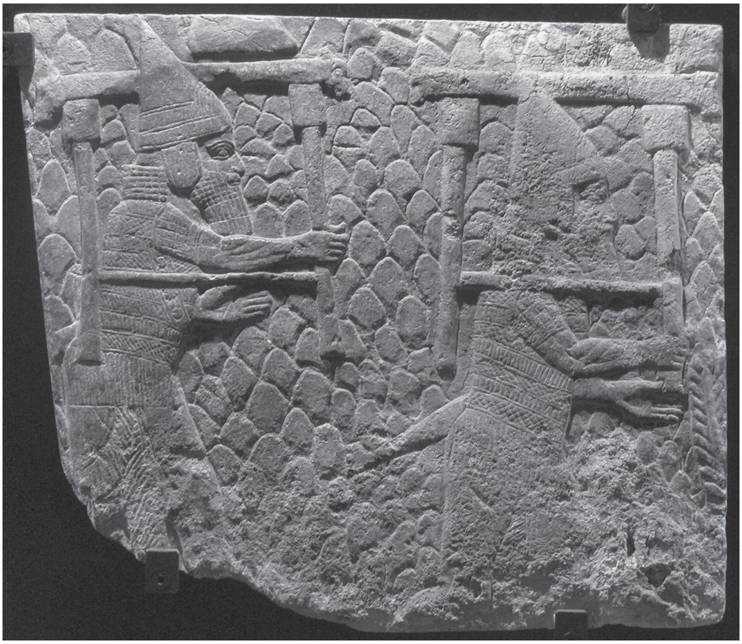

Fig. 5.7. Assyrian soldiers with plunder. Vatican Museum. Photo courtesy of Todd Bolen, BiblePlaces.com.

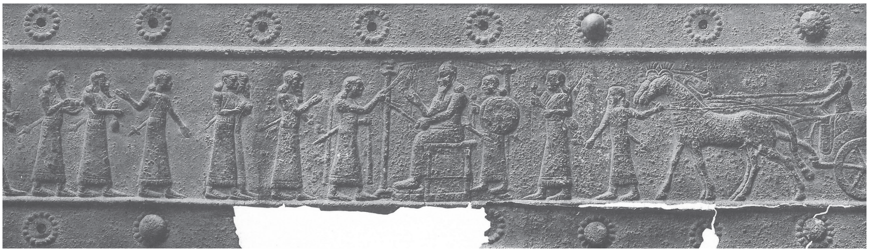

Fig. 5.8. Presenting spoil to Shalmaneser III. Band 9 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 52.

its functions as a place to inspect captured enemy soldiers.[120] Sennacherib updated his palace and modified its courtyard. "I greatly enlarged its outer courtyard for making my thoroughbred horses submissive to the yoke and for reviewing the substantial enemy booty that the god Aššur had given to me."[121]

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[120] RINAP 4:25, 1, vi.35–64; *COS* 4.39:179.

Plunder was often given to the gods. Adad-nirari II gave the gods he captured from a rebel to his gods.[122] Esarhaddon wrote that he invited all the gods of Assyria into his palace and feasted them and presented them with gifts after his victories.[123] The troops also received some of the plunder. Tiglath-pileser III boasted that he spread the prisoners from the land of Unqi among his troops.[124] After the defeat of Babylon, Sennacherib handed the plunder of the city over to his people and "they kept it for themselves."[125] Another text from Sennacherib says that the plunder counted at home did not include that which was distributed among the soldiers on the battlefield.[126] A relief from Assurbanipal shows an officer placing a bracelet on the arm of a spearman to reward him.[127]

This plunder-taking by Assyrians was not always appreciated by other Assyrians.[128] One official received a group of deportees from Tabalaya and supplied them with oxen, sheep, and women, but the king's bodyguard (*qurbūti*) took the items, causing the deportees to flee and the official to be threatened with dereliction of duty (SAA 15.54). An unknown author complained to a colleague that he was stealing some of his men: "The king, our lord, says: 'You must not take booty from them.' But you are assuredly coming and taking booty from our city!" (SAA 18.72). Plunder could also be stolen while it was being moved. Adda-hati wrote to Sargon II about a plot to steal plunder (sheep) when it was being moved from Damascus to Assyria through an ambush with three hundred she-camels (SAA 1.175).

Forced deportation was quite common among the Assyrians as the kings sought to prevent potential rebellions by breaking common bonds.[129] A recently discovered inscription of Sargon II records the claim that he deported six thousand three hundred Assyrian criminals to Hamath and pardoned them.[130] The question of the existence of slavery in Assyria is a debated question, but it appears that the Assyrian did not usually sell deportees as slaves.[131] As one example of forced deportation, Sargon exiled the people of Carchemish and settled Assyrians in their place.

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[121] RINAP 3.1:225,34, 66–68.

[122] RIMA 2:144, A.0.99.1, 16–17.

[123] RINAP 4:25, 1, vi.44–53; *COS* 4.39:179.

[124] RINAP 1:40, 12, 6′–7′.

[125] RINAP 3.2:316, 223, 47.

[126] RINAP 3.1:37, 1, 60–61.

[127] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 253–54, no. 346a (Or.Dr.I.69), no. 346c (BM 124955).

[128] Richardson, "Mesopotamia and the 'New' Military History," 31–32.

[129] For more on Assyrian forced deportation, see Oded, *Mass Deportations*; Paul Garelli, "Les déplacements de personnes dans l'empire assyrien," in *Immigration and*

> In my fifth year of reign, Pisîri of Carchemish sinned against the oath by the great gods and sent (messages of) hostility against Assyria to Mitâ of the land of Muski. I lifted my hand to Assur, my lord, and brought him and his family out (of his city) in chains. Gold, silver, together with the property of his palace and the rebellious people of Carchemish, who were with him, with their goods, I carried off and brought (them) into Assyria. 50 chariots, 200 steeds (or, cavalry-men), 300 foot soldiers, I selected from among them and added them to my royal host. People of Assyria I settled in Carchemish and placed the yoke of Assur, my lord, upon them.[132]

The obligation to feed prisoners of war and deportees was a long-standing problem.[133] Letters from Sin-mudammeq at the Middle Assyrian fortress of Dur-Katlimmu to his lord Assur-iddin (an important official under Tukulti-Ninurta I) illustrate the problems of feeding prisoners. He reported that grasshoppers had eaten their crops and left them with chickpeas; further complicating the situation was one hundred prisoners present with them. How could they feed the prisoners if they could not feed themselves?

Emigration within the Ancient Near East: Festschrift E. Lipiński, ed. Karl van Lerberghe and Antoon Schoors, OLA 65 (Leuven: Peeters, 1995), 79–82.

[130] John David Hawkins, “The New Sargon Stele from Hama,” in Frame, *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea*, 160.

[131] For more on slavery in Assyria, see Isaac Mendelsohn, *Slavery in the Ancient Near East: A Comparative Study of Slavery in Babylonia, Assyria, Syria, and Palestine from the Middle of the Third Millennium to the End of the First Millennium* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1949); Oded, *Mass Deportations*, 74–115; Gershon Galil, *The Lower Stratum Families in the Neo-Assyrian Period*, CHANE 27 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 345–46.

[132] *ARAB* 2:4, §8; Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 316.

[133] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2)*, 78–79; for a study of Assyrians portraying themselves as good shepherds of the captives in their reliefs, see Stephanie Reed, “Blurring the Edges: A Reconsideration of the Treatment of Enemies in Ashurbanipal’s Reliefs,” in *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter*, ed. Jack Cheng and Marian H. Feldman, CHANE 26 (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 101–30.

> Wovon mein Herr mir schrieb: “Die Leute aus Waššukanni, weshalb sind sie nicht hinter ihnen (d.i. den Flüchtigen) her marschiert?” Ihre Ernte haben Heuschrecken gefressen. Nachdem sie die Kirchererbsen aufgezhert haben, gibt es in der Stadt niemanden (mehr). Fünfzig kassitische Soldaten—sowohl Geislen als auch Gefangene—und fünfzig hurritische Soldaten, Geiseln, befinden sich in der Stadt. Zur Bewachung der Stadt gibt es jedoch keine Männer (mehr).[134]

In a later letter he complained that his soldiers were making their provisions out of dust: “Alle Soldaten haben sich nach der Verproviantierung aus dem Staub gemacht.”[135] Several letters to Sargon II described the conditions of the captives in regard to their food supply, including that the captives had taken their harvest with them when they were deported (SAA 1.219). Assur-balti-nishi described the care and relocation of a group of captives who had been brought to his location. He gave “out [provisions] for a whole month, [by the sea]h of 8 litres, and half a cup of salt and cress” (SAA 5.242). Another letter to Sargon II said that each captive was eating three seahs of grain (SAA 1.257). Sargon II commanded that the captives be brought to fortified cities that had good water (SAA 1.247). After the defeat of Mukin-zer in Babylon, the Assyrian governor Assur-shallimanni complained to Tiglath-pileser III about his responsibility to feed six thousand prisoners (SAA 19.81 = ND 2634).

> As to what the king, my l[o]rd, wrote to me: “Feed the 6,000 captives in your presence.” For how long? (They are) 6,000! Can I cut one-third with all the magnates? Did I not write to the king, my lord, last year: “There is no barley.” The king, my [l]or[d], told me: “If you had appealed to me, I would have given you 40,000 (homers) of barley.
>
> Now does the king know that I have no barley? How long still? Let 6,000-3,000 (homers) be given to me, and let 3,000 (homers) also be giv[en] to Šamaš-bunaya. This (is what) I am herewith appealing for to the king, [m]y l[or]d.
>
> As to what the king, my lord, wrote to me: “I am giving them (= the other magnates) the later captives.” Let them share these (6,000 captives) with me, and I will (then) share the later (captives) with them.

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[134] Cancik-Kirschbaum, *Mittelassyrischen Briefe aus Tall Šēẖ Ḥamad*, 97; see Richardson, “Mesopotamia and the ‘New’ Military History,” 44.

[135] Cancik-Kirschbaum, *Mittelassyrischen Briefe aus Tall Šēẖ Ḥamad*, 108.

> Perhaps the kin[g], my lord, will say: "How are they to enter into the presence of Šamaš-bunaya? Where are they to be stocked?" There are 150 walled towns of Šamaš-bunaya in Arrapha. Let them be brought in there.

A letter dealing with captives describes a kind of camp where they were gathered: "I wrote as follows [to] the bodyguard accompanying them: '[Bring th]em to Baqarru and let them stay there. [Give the]m bread and water and send [a report] about them to the Palace. Whatever they write to you from the Palace, you shall do accordingly!'" (SAA 15.12). Several reliefs of Assurbanipal depict what appear to be prisoners eating a meal together.[136] Bel-ibni reported to Assurbanipal that he was coming to the palace with a thousand prisoners. However, he lacked food to feed them, and offered a suggestion about fixing the problem. "But the king my lord knows that there are no provisions in the land. I could obtain grain from the Pukudeans, in exchange for dates and money, and distribute it among them. I am therefore bringing them with me now; the lord of kings my lord should send a guardsman to provide the prisoners with food on the way."[137]

A series of reliefs from Assurbanipal depicts Elamite prisoners being transported by reed boats.[138] Sometimes the reliefs show Assyrian guards beating prisoners (fig. 5.9). A relief from Sennacherib shows the march of prisoners away from battle, but they are being actively driven by Assyrian soldiers, who are holding them by the hair and hitting them.[139] Assur-matka-tera wrote to the Assyrian king about preparing some Arameans for deportation, including details on what the travel provisions consisted of (SAA 19.17 = ND 2643). "I will give them their (travel) provisions, sackcloth, leather bags, sandals and oil. I have no donkey stallions available, but if I did have donkey stallions available, I would offer my carts for the campaign." The same official also wrote to the king about acquiring wives for the Aramean soldiers (SAA 19.18 = ND 2725). "As to the Arameans about whom the king said: 'They should be made to marry wives,' [I] have

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[136] *ANEP*, 51, no. 168 (BM 124919); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:446; Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 66.

[137] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 47 (*ABL* 792 = *SLA* 46).

[138] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 22 (Or.Dr.VII.9; Louvre AO 22202; Istanbul 1001).

[139] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 70, no. 83 (Or.Dr.II.73).

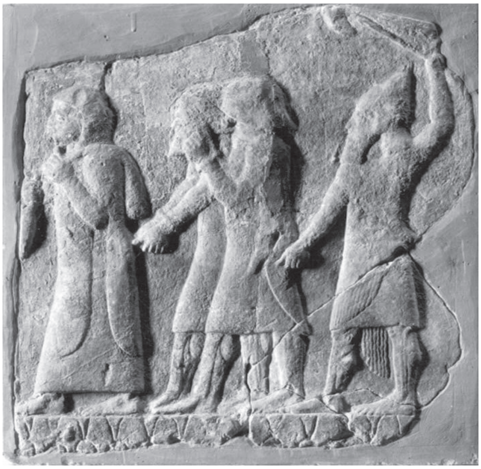

Fig. 5.9. Assyrian beating prisoners. Metropolitan 32.143.17. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

seen women in great numbers (there) but the[ir fath]ers re[fuse] to g[ive them], saying: '(Not) until they give m[oney] to us.' Let money be given to them (the Arameans) so they can marry."

The Assyrians often deported their enemies to force them to serve as labor.[140] Sargon II employed prisoners of war to build Dur-Sharrukin.[141] Sennacherib forced his prisoners of war to perform a variety of tasks, including carrying baskets of earth, making bricks, and transporting reeds to Nineveh.[142] After conquering the western kings near the seacoast, Esarhaddon compelled them to build a city in another place, which he called Kar-Esarhaddon.[143] He also employed prisoners of war to build an arsenal.[144] In the Rassam Cylinder, Assurbanipal wrote that he forced captured Arabian kings to help construct buildings.[145]

Hostages (*līṭu* and *līṭūtu*) were also sometimes taken, especially from the family of a vassal king to encourage his obedience.[146] Assurnasirpal II called himself the "conqueror of hostages."[147] He took hostages from the people of Nirbu who had submitted to him, but afterward they rebelled, and Assurnasirpal II defeated them in battle.[148] This time he did not take hostages but captives, killing many of their fighters and teenagers.[149] A defeated king would never be called a hostage, but only a prisoner of war. The hostages were guaranteed to be safe in Assyria as long as the vassal king continued to obey. One example of this practice can be found in the annals of Tiglath-pileser I.

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[140] Oded, *Mass Deportations*, 54–59.

[141] *ARAB* 2:42, §83; see also *ANEHST*, 340–42; Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 309–10.

[142] RINAP 3.1:37, 1, 71–72; for another example of forced labor by prisoners, see RINAP 3.2:48, 42, 12–13.

[143] RINAP 4:16, 1, ii.65–82; *COS* 4.39:175–76.

[144] RINAP 4:156, 77, 40–44.

[145] *ARAB* 2:322, §836; *COS* 4.41:195; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 256.

[146] For more on hostages in Assyria, see Stefan Zawadzki, "Hostages in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in Lerberghe, *Immigration and Emigration*, 449–58.

> With regard to the city Urraṭinaš, their stronghold situated in the land Panaru, the terror, fear, (and) splendour of the god Aššur, my lord, overwhelmed them. To save their lives they took their gods (and) possessions and flew like birds to ledges on high mountains. Taking my chariotry and army I crossed the Tigris. Šadi-Tešub, son of Ḫattuḫu, king of the city Urraṭinaš, submitted to me in his own land. I took his natural sons and his family as hostages. He brought to me as tribute and tax 60 copper kettles, bronze vats, and large bronze bath-tubs, together with 120 men, cattle, and sheep. I accepted his (tribute), spared him (and) preserved his life, I imposed upon him forever the heavy yoke of my dominion. I completely conquered the extensive land Katmuḫu and subdued it.[150]

Sometimes Assyrian soldiers were taken by enemy troops, which led to rescue attempts. Gabbu-ana-Assur reported to Sargon II on attempts to retrieve six soldiers who had been captured by the Urartians; he prohibited his major-domo from employing force, but wanted him to write to the Urartians and demand an explanation (SAA 5.115). An Assyrian reported to Assurbanipal that he rescued eight Assyrians who were in prison in Elam, clothed them, and sent them to the palace (*ABL* 1430 = *SLA* 47). Bel-ibni wrote that he had sent troops to rescue Belshunu, his older brother.

> As for Belshunu, my elder brother, a servant of the lord of kings my lord, ever since the time when that fellow, rejected of Bel, accursed of the gods, Nabu-bel-shumate, rebelled four years ago,—(Nabu-bel-shumate) has bound him hand and foot with fetters, abused him in prison, and made him see the darkness of all lands. When I sent those soldiers on his

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147. RIMA 2:194–95, A.0.101.1, i.16–17.
148. RIMA 2:202, A.0.101.1, ii.11–12.
149. RIMA 2:203, A.0.101.1, ii.15–19.
150. RIMA 2:15–16, A.0.87.1, ii.36–57.

> behalf, after breaking through they brought him out, breaking the iron rings on his hands and feet: I am sending him to the palace of the lord of kings my lord (?).[151]

Like the Egyptians, the frequent depiction of military scribes counting the severed heads of those defeated in battle in the Assyrian reliefs indicate that this was most likely a common practice throughout the Assyrian period.[152] Among the earliest examples is a relief from Assurnasirpal II in which the soldiers carry severed heads while musicians play as part of the victory celebration (BM 124550). A relief from Sargon II depicts a soldier cutting off the head of an enemy, while one from Tiglath-pileser III shows two Assyrian soldiers bringing heads of the enemy to an Assyrian leader.[153] Two scribes are counting the heads of the enemies that have been laid at their feet by Assyrian soldiers in a relief from Sennacherib.[154] Another relief shows two scribes counting not only heads but also plunder, mostly consisting of weapons.[155] A relief from Tayinat depicts several Assyrian soldiers walking over the corpses of their enemies and holding the severed heads of the enemy corpses.[156]

5.2.5. Later Empires

Taking plunder was not reported as much in the inscriptions of the later empires.[157] The Babylonian Chronicles record that a large amount of plunder was taken from several Assyrian cities when they fell to the

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[151] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 28–29 (*ABL* 460 = *SLA* 32).

[152] Fabrice De Backer, “Cruelty and Military Refinements,” *Res Antiquae* 6 (2009): 28.

[153] Sagron II: Albenda, *Palace of Sargon King of Assyria*, pl. 96; see also the decapitation of Teumman in BM 124801c. Tiglath-pileser III: Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 48–49 (Or.Dr.III.C29 = Zürich 1919); for a similar scene, see ibid., pl. 59 (Or.Dr.I.9).

[154] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 56, no. 51 (Or.Dr.IV.14); see also ibid., p. 83, no. 102 (Or.Dr.I.70) and pls. 174–75, 244 (Or.Dr.I.34 = BM 124786).

[155] Ibid., pls. 193, 195, no. 277 (Or.Dr.I.46 = BM 124782).

[156] DSC 07613 in the Oriental Institute, University of Chicago.

[157] On plunder in Babylon, see Joannés, “Guerre et économie dans l’Empire néo-babylonien,” 73–75.

Babylonians.[158] Nebuchadnezzar II twice took a large amount of spoil from Hattu, although the exact content of the spoil is not specified. [159] In the Wadi Brisa Inscription he made no mention of spoils, except that he restored people to their homes, made them content, and protected them from other people bothering them.[160] In his sixth year he took spoils from the Arabs (including their gods).[161] The Old Testament also refers to Nebuchadnezzar II twice taking many captives and the treasures of the temple when he conquered Jerusalem (2 Kgs 24:12–16; 25:11–17). Nabopolassar, in one of the few inscriptions including warfare, did not mention receiving any spoil.[162]

Mass deportations continued in the Babylonian empire. Most notably, The Babylonians deported the inhabitants of Jerusalem to Babylon, though they were not enslaved (perhaps because the economy of Babylon was not developed enough to support such a large number of slaves).[163] Nabonidus compelled a group of prisoners of war from Cilicia to work in construction, framing it as devoting them to his gods: "J'ai voué aux dieux Bêl, Nabû, et Nergal, dieux qui marchent à mes côtés, pour (effectuer) les travaux de construction, 2850 hommes, butin du pays de Cilicie, dont mon Seigneur Marduk qui m'a donné la prééminence sur les rois mes prédécesseurs avait rempli mes mains en abondance."[164]

Likewise, the main inscription from Darius (DB) does not focus on plundering, but only on the death of armies and kings who rebel against him. However, the relief of Darius at Bisitun shows bound captives coming before the Persian king (fig. 5.10). According to Herodotus, Croesus advised Cyrus that he should take a tenth of the plunder from the soldiers to limit their wealth; to prevent their wrath he should say that it was going to Zeus (*Hist.* 1.89). Herodotus also claimed that Darius brought women from other cities to Babylon to provide wives for the men there (who had killed many of the Babylonian women to preserve food during

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[158] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 223.

[159] Ibid., 228–29.

[160] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 270–71.

[161] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 230–31.

[162] *COS* 2.121:307.

[163] Muhammad A. Dandamayev, "Freedom and Slavery in the Ancient Near East during the Neo-Babylonian and Persian Periods," in *Von Sumer bis Homer: Festschrift für Manfred Schretter zum 60. Geburtstag am 25. Februar 2004*, ed. Robert Rollinger, AOAT 325 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2005), 223–24.

[164] Joannés, "Guerre et économie dans l'Empire néo-babylonien," 79.

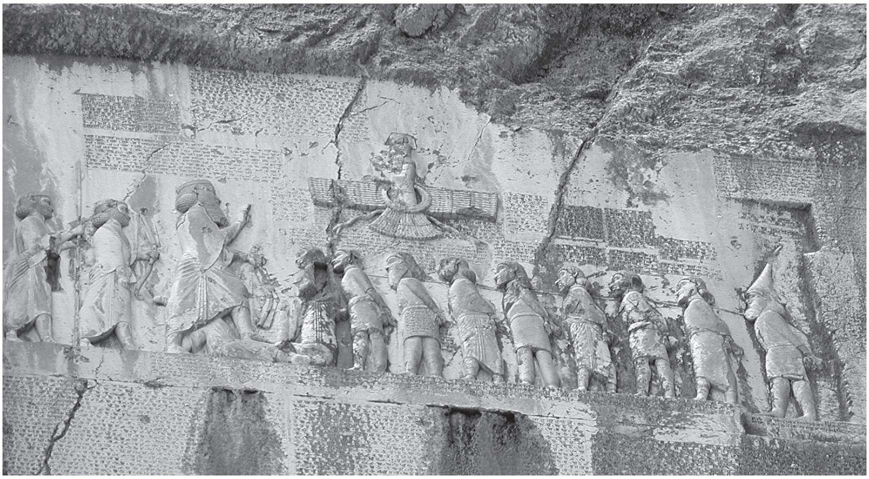

Fig. 5.10. Bound prisoners on the Bisitun relief. Bisitun, Iran. Photo courtesy of Hara1603, Wikimedia Commons.

the siege) after the Persians had conquered the city (*Hist.* 3.159). The Persians also engaged in mass deportations.[165] As one example, the people of Barce (north Africa) were moved to a village in Baktria (northeast of Persia) (*Hist.* 4.204). The Persepolis Fortification tablets reveal that the Persians employed war captives as forced labor.[166] Xenophon records one story in which Cyrus treated a group of prisoners kindly, taking off their bonds and providing surgeons for them (*Cyr.* 3.2.12). Also according to Xenophon, Cyrus distributed spoils after a battle based on the merit of his troops (*Cyr.* 8.4.28–30).

5.2.6. West Semitic

Many kings took plunder from their enemies. Idrimi, a king of Alalakh in the fifteenth century, said that when he defeated the Hittites, he not only took a portion for himself (to build a house and a throne), but he gave plunder to his troops and improved the housing of everyone in his city.[167] The Hittite king Suppiluliuma I wrote to Niqmaddu II, the king of Ugarit, to convince him to fight against a rebellion by offering him a portion of the spoils, especially the prisoners captured in battle.[168] When Jehoash conquered the Judean forces at Beth-Shemesh, he took extensive plunder from Jerusalem. "He seized all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king's house, as well as hostages; then he returned to Samaria" (2 Kgs 14:14). An inscription from the ninth century in Aramaic thanked the god Hadad for plunder: "That which Hadad gave our lord Hazael from ʿUmqi in the year that our lord crossed the river."[169]

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[165] For a summary, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 505–6.

[166] Gerassimos G. Aperghis, "War Captives and Economic Exploitation: Evidence from the Persepolis Fortification Tablets," in *Économie antique: La guerre dans les économies antiques*, ed. Jean Andreau, Pierre Briant, and Raymond Descat, EAH 5 (Saint-Bertrand-de-Comminges: musée archéologique départemental, 2000), 127–44.

Mesha gave part of the plunder to his god. He took a "Davidic altar hearth" (אראל דודה) from Ataroth, which he brought before Chemosh at Kerioth.[170] He also took the vessels of YHWH and brought them before Chemosh.[171] The Old Testament frequently describes giving plunder to YHWH, such as the mysterious "treasury of the house of YHWH" after the defeat of Jericho (Josh 6:24) and the plunder that David dedicated to YHWH (2 Sam 8:11–12). Plunder also went to the soldiers; as noted above, Idrimi gave some plunder to his troops. Naaman had an Israelite slave girl that he had captured as plunder in a previous raid on the Israelites (2 Kgs 5:2).

Some forced deportation is attested (though usually the nations in the West Semitic world were the ones being deported). Mesha killed the people of Gad and settled people from Sharon and Maharith there.[172] Many prisoners were forced to work. Vidal argues that prisoners at Ugarit were under the direct control of the king, though the evidence is minimal.[173] Mesha recorded in the Mesha Stela that he put prisoners to work: "And I hewed the shafts for the 'citadel,' with prisoners of Israel."[174] In another inscription Mesha spoke of using Ammonite prisoners: "And with the captives of the Ammonites [I built for the] shaft a mighty gate."[175] Not all prisoners were treated badly, however. Some prisoners could be redeemed, as Namhurya requested money from the pharaoh so he could ransom some men captured by Aziru (EA 55).[176] After YHWH had struck the Arameans besieging Dothan with blindness and Elisha had led them into Samaria, Elisha instructed the king of Israel to let them go; after a feast the king allowed them to return home (2 Kgs 6:15–23).[177]

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[167] *COS* 1.148:479–80.

[168] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 126 (*CTH* 45).

[169] Israel Ephʿal and Joseph Naveh, "Hazael's Booty Inscriptions," *IEJ* 39 (1989): 192–200.

[170] Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 394 (Mesha Inscription, l. 12; however, the translation of אראל דודה is uncertain).

[171] Mesha Inscription, ll. 17–18.

[172] Mesha Inscription, ll. 11–14.

[173] Jordi Vidal, "Ugarit at War (3). Prisoners of War," *UF* 42 (2010): 722–23.

[174] Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 395 (Mesha Inscription, ll. 25–26).

5.3. Humiliation of Enemies

Beyond simply capturing the defeated enemy, the victors would often humiliate the enemy in vicious ways. Sometimes, this treatment was born out of revenge after a difficult battle or siege, but it also operated as a way to convince other enemies to surrender rather than fight. Even beyond the enemies, the humiliation of enemies encouraged the people in the homeland to continue fighting.[178]

5.3.1. Egyptian

Especially in the New Kingdom, the Egyptians left many records describing the humiliation of their enemies.[179] Sometimes this humiliation was relatively benign, such as Thutmose III's description of his defeated enemies: "Their troo[ps] were lying around on (their) backs like fish in the bight of a net as his majesty's victorious army tallied their possessions."[180]

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[175] Bob Becking, "Exile and Forced Labour in Bêt Harʾoš: Remarks on a Recently Discovered Moabite Inscription," in Galil, *Homeland and Exile*, 4; see also *COS* 4.20:90; Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 421–22.

[176] For other references to ransoming prisoners in the Amarna letters, see also EA 109, 114, and 116.

[177] However, the parallel with the Assyrians providing food to their captives (see above) might imply that this provision of food was also a symbol of superiority; see the argument in Ronnie Goldstein, "The Provision of Food to the Aramaean Captives in II Reg 6, 22–23," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 101–5.

[178] Mario Liverani, "The King and His Audience," in Gaspa, *From Source to History*, 373–85.

[179] For an overview of how earlier pharaohs might have mistreated their enemies based on the Pyramid Texts (including possible references to martial cannibalism), see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 363–66.

[180] *COS* 2.2A:11.

In one of Ramesses II's reliefs depicting the battle of Qadesh, the prince of Aleppo had to be rescued in humiliating fashion by his troops: "The despicable Ruler of Aleppo, he being emptied (of water) by his troops, after His Majesty had thrown him into the water."[181] Ramesses III insulted a Nubian army by looking "upon troops ('bowmen') as women."[182]

The Egyptians sometimes recorded their prisoners praising the pharaoh. Seti I quoted several defeated Asiatic chiefs: "Hail to you, King of Egypt, Sun of the Nine Bows! Mighty is your power, Lord of the Gods! You have brought (captive) the (far) limit(s) of the foreign lands, and you have bound them under the feet of your son, the Horus-falcon who brings life to the Two Lands."[183] Captured enemies of Ramesses II praise him in similar terms. "Said by the fallen ones of Hatti, in extolling the Good god: 'Grant to us the breath that you give, O good ruler! See we are beneath your sandals. Dread of you has shattered the Hatti-land, and its ruler is fallen because of your might. We are like a flock of boars(?) which a fierce lion has hunted!'"[184] A defeated Syrian chief proclaimed that his trust in Baal was misplaced because Ramesses II was the great god: "Says the despicable chief, in magnifying the Lord of Both Lands: '(I) believed (that) there was none like Baal, (but) the Ruler (is) his true son for ever!'"[185] Ramesses III recorded the surrender statement of a group of enemies that describes their submissive attitude.

> Said by the chiefs of all the foreign countries who are in His Majesty's grasp: "You are Re, O good Ruler! You are just like your father, the Lord of the Gods, and your appearance merges with his appearance, like Re shining for the Bows. Your [arm] is strong, and your heart stout; you are exactly like Baal in his real form. Breath is in your possession and yours is life. May we breathe it as you have commanded, O victorious King! You caused us to cease bragging in our land—it means (that) we have come <on> our [knees], through dread of you. Your renown and the fear of you enters into our bodies, and you caused [our off]spring

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[181] R.40 in *RITA* 2.3C:22; for the relief, see Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 3; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:100; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 293.

[182] "Nubian War Scenes, Medinet Habu," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.1:9.

[183] "Karnak, Campaign against the Hittites (Undated)," *RITA* 1.Seti I.6:16.

[184] "The Battle against Dapur: Luxor and Ramesseum," *RITA* 2.19:46.

[185] "Beit el-Wali Temple, N. Wall of Entrance-Hall: King subdues Syrians and Libyans," *RITA* 2.37:59.

> to retreat on the field of battle. Your name is great and victorious amid the Nine Bows—"A Montu is he who is <in> Egypt," we say with one accord.[186]

Pharaohs enjoyed putting their enemies under their feet whenever possible. In a relief from Beit El-Wali Ramesses II received plunder from his defeated enemies while standing on a platform that is supported by the backs of several prisoners.[187] Tutankhamen even made sandals with prisoners depicted on them so he could walk on them everywhere he went.[188] At Abu Simbel, Ramesses II's throne was supported by a series of prisoners (fig. 5.11). In a relief of his battle against the Sea People, the larger-than-life Ramesses III shoots his bow at the enemy while standing on the heads of several prisoners lying on the ground under him (fig 4.35).[189]

Impalement of enemies was rare among the Egyptians, but both Akhenaten and Merenptah recorded their impalement of Nubians.[190] "Never shall they leave any people for the Libu, any who shall bring them up in their land! They are cast to the ground, (?) by hundred-thousands and ten-thousands, the remainder being impaled ('put to the stake') on the South of Memphis."[191] In the same stela Merenptah recorded further humiliation of the enemy. "(As for) the remainder, the hands of (some of) them were cut off because of their crime; (as for) others, ears and eyes were removed, (and they were) taken to Kush."[192] The Narmer Palette depicts ten bound captives laid out in two rows with their decapitated heads lying between their legs (top right of fig. 5.12).[193] It appears that nine of these ten captives have also had their penis removed and placed next to their

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[186] "Medinet Habu, Syrian War Scenes, Second Series," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.22:66.

[187] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:163a; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 11; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 260.

[188] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 6.

[189] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:115; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 307.

[190] Colleen Manassa, *The Great Karnak Inscription of Merneptah: Grand Strategy in the Thirteenth Century BC*, YES 5 (New Haven: Yale Egyptological Seminar, 2003), 100; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 118–19.

[191] "Nubian War Stelae," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.1+15:1.

[192] "Nubian War Stelae," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.1+15:2.

[193] *ANEP*, 93, no. 297.

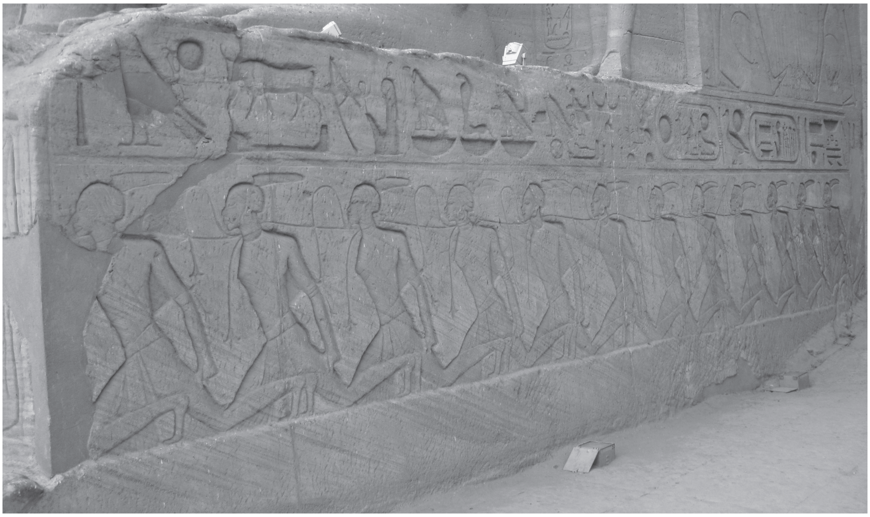

Fig. 5.11. Bound prisoners under the feet of Ramesses II. Abu Simbel, Egypt. Photo courtesy of isawnyu, Wikimedia Commons.

decapitated head.[194] Ahmose, the Egyptian general, wrote that a Nubian tribesman was hung upside down at the bow of the pharaoh's boat.[195] Although this kind of event was rare, Amenhotep II exhibited the dead bodies of his enemies.

> It was to the delight of his father Amun that he returned after he himself had slain with his club seven chieftains who were in the district of Tekhsy and who were placed upside down at the brow of the falcon ship of his Majesty, the name of which is as follows "'Akheperure' causes the Two Lands to endure."
>
> Thereupon six men from among the foe were hung in front of the rampart of Thebes and the hands likewise. The other enemy was then transported south to Nubia and hung on the rampart of Napata in order that men should see the victories of his Majesty for ever and ever in all the lowlands and hill countries of Nubia since he has conquered the

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[194] Vivian Davies and Renée Friedman, "The Narmer Palette: An Overlooked Detail," in Eldamaty, *Egyptian Museum Collections around the World*, 243–46; Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, 95.

[195] *COS* 2.1:7.

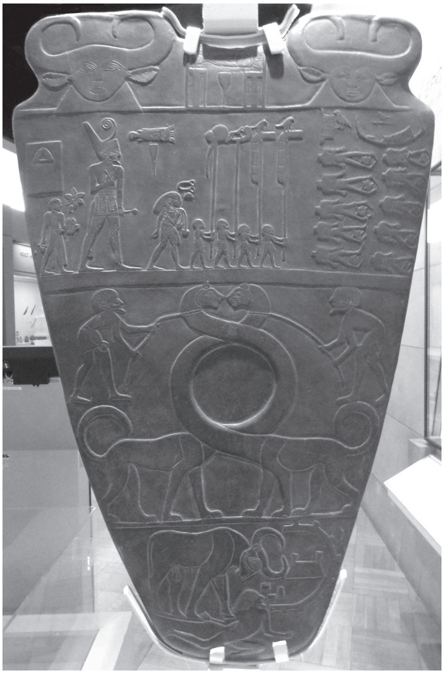

Fig. 5.12. Corpses and heads on top right side of Narmer Palette. Cast of Narmer Palette in Royal Ontario Museum (original in Cairo Museum). Photo courtesy of Dadeort, Wikimedia Commons.

> southerners and subdued the inhabitants of the north, even the limits of the whole world and that whereon Rē' shines.[196]

5.3.2. Hittite

Hittite literature contains few references to the humiliation of enemies. Anitta brought a captured king back to sit next to him, showing his subservience. "But when I [cam]e back to Neša, I led with me the ruler (literally, 'man') of Purušḫanda. And when he goes into the inner chamber, he sits down before me."[197] Hattusili I created an interesting way to humiliate two captured kings: "And [I] hitched <the king of> Ḫaššuwa and the king of Ḫaḫḫa to a wagon."[198] Since the percentage of blinded prisoners seems too high to be accidental, it appears that selected prisoners were intentionally blinded. Some of the blinded prisoners worked at a mill to further humiliate them in a job that was usually performed by women; a letter from Šarpa to a provincial governor reported that blind men had fled from a mill house.[199]

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[196] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 27 (Amada/Elephantine Stela); see also *ANET*, 247–48; *ARE* 2:797.

[197] Hoffner, "Treatment and Long Term Use," 62 (*CTH* 1.A).

[198] Ibid (*CTH* 4A).

5.3.3. Early Mesopotamian

Though a few texts refer to burying the defeated dead, humiliation of enemies was common in early Mesopotamia.[200] One side of the Stela of the Vultures depicts the deity Ningirsu holding the enemies of the king Eannatum of Lagash in a large net (fig. 5.13). On the other side, vultures fly off carrying the heads and arms of the enemy corpses (fig. 5.14).[201] The Rimush stela depicts a kneeling prisoner being struck in the head (fig. 5.15). The Anubanini relief shows a goddess leading two naked captives by a rope like animals. Both the goddess and the king stand on top of another captive.[202] Sargon the Great "captured Lugal-zage-si, king of Uruk, in battle (and) led him off to the gate of the god Enlil in a neck stock."[203] A legend of Sargon from several centuries after his life similarly describes his humiliation of a variety of enemies.

> The prince of Tukriš I dressed in an animal skin. As for (the men of) Hudura: I applied a slave mark to their heads. As for (the men of) Alašiya: I covered their heads like that of a woman. Of the Amorites I destroyed their penis instead of cutting off their noses. I tied the heads of

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[199] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 210 (*HKM* 59; *CTH* 190); see also *HKM* 58 (*CTH* 190) for another reference to blind men working in a mill house; for more on blinded prisoners, see Hoffner, "Treatment and Long Term Use," 67–69. However, Lorenz and Schrakamp argue that these blinded men working in the mills were not necessarily prisoners of war; see Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 38.

[200] On burial of the enemy dead, see A. Westenholz, "*Berūtum*, *damtum*, and Old Akkadian KI.GAL: Burial of Dead Enemies in Ancient Mesopotamia," *AfO* 23 (1970): 27–31. For humiliation, see Rita Dolce, "Beyond Defeat: The Psychological Annihilation of the Vanquished in Pre-Classical Near Eastern Visual Communication," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 237–68. Naturally, exceptions can be found; Shamshi-Adad wrote in a letter to his son that the people of Zalmaqum were not to be harmed, so they would see his care for them and they would be unified in joining the cause of the king (ARM 1.29 = LAPO 17.474 = Sasson 3.4.b.vii).

[201] *ANEP*, 94–95, nos. 298, 300 (Louvre AO 16109).

[202] *ANEP*, 177, no. 524 (Zohab, Iran).

[203] RIME 2:13–15, E2.1.1.2, 25–34.

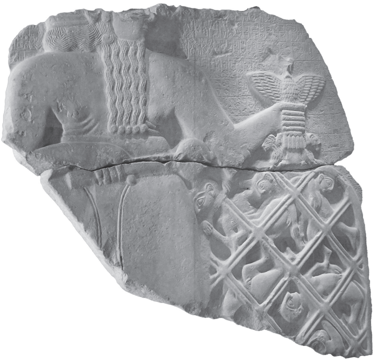

Fig. 5.13. Prisoners in a net on the Stela of Vultures. Louvre AO 16109. Picture courtesy of Eric Gaba, Wikimedia Commons.

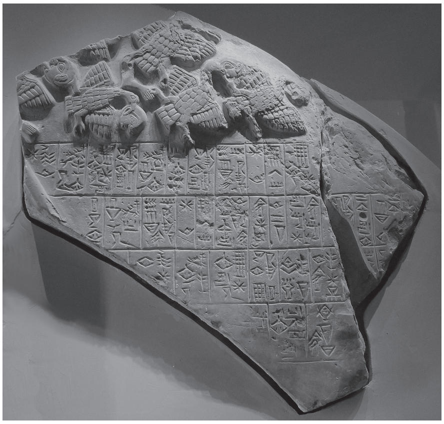

Fig. 5.14. Birds carrying body parts on the Stela of Vultures. Louvre AO 16109. Picture courtesy of Mbzt, Wikimedia Commons.

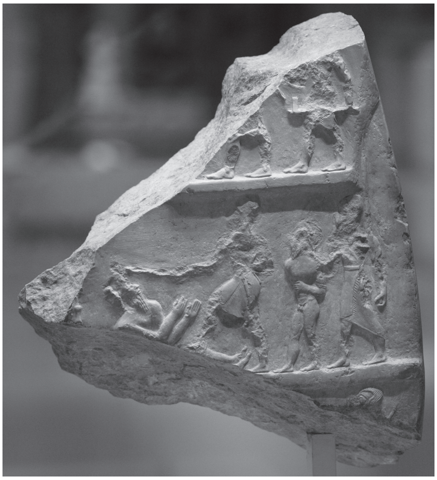

Fig. 5.15. Striking kneeling prisoner on the Rimush Stela. Louvre AO 2678. Picture courtesy of Rama, Wikimedia Commons.

> the Kilarites with a leather strap. I released the *sutuhhu* of the … I shaved the scalp of (the men of) Hattum. I pinched the men of Luhme with a toggle-pin. As for the (women of) Gutium (and the men of) Lullu(bu)m and Hahhum: I slit open their clothes.[204]

Utu-hegal defeated Tirigan, the Gutian king, and humiliated him. "The envoys of Utu-ḫegal captured Tirigan along with his wife (and) children at Dabrum. They put handcuffs and a blindfold on him. Utu-ḫegal made him lie at the feet of the god U[tu] and placed his foot on his neck."[205] Seal fragments from third-millennium Mari include the head of an enemy on a chariot.[206]

The same types of humiliation continued in the second millennium. A Mari letter describes defeated raiders being sent back home naked (ARM 2.31 = LAPO 17.591).[207] Dadusha cut off the head of the defeated king of Qaraba and brought it back to Eshnunna.[208] A terracotta plaque from Kish (eighteenth century) depicts a king walking over the bodies of his defeated enemies.[209] An unknown author recounted to Zimri-Lim his recommendation about the best way to announce the defeat of the city of Mišlan: send two mutilated survivors to tell the news.

> Ever since my lord captured the town of Mišlan, that is entirely enough for me. Another thing. Previously, I wrote to my lord as follows: "Let them escort their two surviving (Yaminite) *ḫana* to the border, and then at the border, mutilate them. Let their survivors go to the Yaminites in order to proclaim that my lord has captured the town of Mišlan by force."[210]

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[204] Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 154–55.

[205] RIME 2:287, E2.13.6.4, 115–123.

[206] Dominique Beyer, "Some Observations on the War Scenes on the Seals from Mari City II," in *Making Pictures of War: Realia et Imaginaria in the Iconology of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Laura Battini, AANEA 1 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2016), 9–10.

[207] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 150; however, this might simply mean that the raiders were forced to return the plunder that they had taken; as in the translation of Durand: "J'ai chevauché à leur poursuite et j'ai fait revenir la troupe sans son butin" in Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 237–38.

[208] *ANEHST*, 99.

[209] Silvana Di Paolo, "Visualizing War in the Old Babylonian Period: Drama and Canon," in Batini, *Making Pictures of War*, 34–35.

[210] Fleming, *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors*, 92 (ARM 26.282).

A few texts refer to the mistreatment of prisoners, including beheading.[211] Two administrative documents from Ebla refer to delivering the heads of two defeated kings to the king of Ebla, most likely after these two kings were defeated in battle.[212] Part of a relief from Ebla depicts a man carrying two heads.[213] A Mari text describes the beheading of a prisoner as a way to frighten the nomads into gathering quickly (ARM 2.48 = LAPO 17.559 = Sasson 4.5.c.iv.1). However, beheading could cause problems later when the nation or family of the victim sought vengeance. "Shadun-laba wrote to me saying: 'Because I cut off the head of Ishme-Adad, the enemy of my lord, and had it sent to my lord, the men of Hurra and the man of Shinah have come and cut down my orchards!'"[214] Some prisoners were blinded, perhaps to reduce their mobility.[215] However, this was not always effective, as evidenced by a few texts that refer to blind people who have run away.[216] Shu-sin offered captives to the gods after he blinded them.

> He blinded the men of those cities, whom he had overtaken, and established them as domestic (servants) in the orchards of the god Enlil, the goddess Ninlil and of the other great gods. And the [wom]en of [those

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[211] Catagnoti, "In the Aftermath of the War," 50; for more on beheading in early Mesopotamia, see Rita Dolce, "The 'Head of the Enemy' in the Sculptures from the Palaces of Nineveh: An Example of 'Cultural Migration'?," *Iraq* 66 (2004): 121–32; Dolce, "'Losing One's Head': Some Hints on Procedures and Meanings in the Ancient Near East," in Battini, *Making Pictures of War*, 45–56; Dolce, "Headless Mortals and Gods: Some Remarks on Decapitation in the Ancient Near East," in Kaelin, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress*, 1:83–97.

[212] Archi, "Two Heads for the King of Ebla," 388–89; Archi, "Men at War in the Ebla Period: On the Unevennes of the Written Documents," in Kleinerman, *Why Should Someone Who Knows Something Conceal It?*, 32; for more on mutilation of the enemy, see G. Minunno, "La mutilation du corps de l'ennemi," in Abrahimi, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 247–56.

[213] It is currently in the Idlib Museum in Syria; for pictures see Aruz, *Art of the First Cities*, 176; Dolce, "'Head of the Enemy' in the Sculptures," 125–26.

[214] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 144 (ARM 2.33 = LAPO 17.583); also Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 479–80.

[215] Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," 87; for more on the blinding of prisoners (and a possible translation of the word as "manly"), see Garcia-Ventura, "Ur III Biopolitics," 13–15.

[216] Wolfgang Heimpel, "Blind Workers in Ur III Texts," *KASKAL* 6 (2009): 46–47.

> cities], whom he had overtaken, he offered as a present to the weaving mills of the god Enlil, the goddess Ninlil and of the other great gods.[217]

5.3.4. Assyrian

Although the Assyrian kings described their enemies in humiliating ways, it often extended far beyond the rhetorical level.[218] Shalmaneser I blinded fourteen thousand four hundred captives from Ḫanigalbat.[219] The Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I captured Kashtiliashu and "trod with my feet upon his lordly neck as though it were a footstool."[220] An obelisk from Assur-bel-kala depicts the Assyrian king holding captives by a rope.[221] A hunting poem about Tiglath-pileser I describes in terrible terms what he did to those who defied him. "He slits the wombs of pregnant women; he blinds the infants."[222] Even among the violent Assyrian kings, Assurnasirpal II seems to go beyond the average harsh treatment of the defeated. In the case of Ahi-iababa, he flayed the rebellious nobles, draped their skin in a pile in front of their city Suru, placed others on stakes, and cut the flesh of the royal eunuchs. As for Ahi-iababa himself, Assurnasirpal II brought him to Nineveh, flayed him, and draped his skin over the wall.[223] After he defeated the city Tela, he burned captives, cut off arms, hands, noses, and ears from prisoners, gouged out their eyes, made a pile of heads, hung heads on trees around the city, and "burnt their adolescent boys (and) girls."[224] The reliefs of Assurnasirpal II include vultures waiting to feast on the dead (see, e.g., BM 124556). Later kings continued the tradition of cruelty. The Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III include images of mutilating the enemy (fig. 5.16). After Shalmaneser III defeated Arsashku, he made an example of it, including a statue of himself to publicize what he had done.

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[217] RIME 3.2:304, E3.2.1.4.3, iv.15–31.

[218] For a helpful survey of this phenomenon, see Zawadzki, "Depicting Hostile Rulers in the Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions"; for many pictures of this cruelty in the reliefs, see Erika Bleibtreu, "Grisly Assyrian Record of Torture and Death," *BAR* 17.1 (1991): 53–61, 75; De Backer, "Cruelty and Military Refinements"; De Backer, "Fragmentation of the Enemy in the Ancient Near East during the Neo-Assyrian Period," in *State, Power, and Violence*, ed. Margo Kitts (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 393–412; Ariel Bagg, "Where Is the Public? A New Look at the Brutality Scenes in Neo-Assyrian Royal Inscriptions and Art," in Battini, *Making Pictures of War*, 57–82.

[219] RIMA 1:184, A.0.77.1, 74–75.

[220] RIMA 1:245, A.0.78.5, 62–63.

[221] *ANEP*, 152, no. 440 (BM 118898).

[222] Mordechai Cogan, "'Ripping Open Pregnant Women' in Light of an Assyrian Analogue," *JAOS* 103 (1983): 756 (VAT 13833); Cogan says that this is the only reference to ripping open pregnant women in Assyrian literature.

[223] RIMA 2:199–200, A.0.101.1, i.89–94.

[224] RIMA 2:201, A.0.101.1, i.115–ii.2; the adolescent boys (*batūlu*) and girls

> I erected towers of heads before his gate; [some] (heads) of nobles [I spread out] within [the piles], others I erected on stakes around the piles. Moving on from the city Arṣašku [I ascended] Mount [Eritia]. I made a colossal royal statue of myself (and) [wrote] thereon the praises of Aššur, my lord, and the victorious conquests which I had been achieving in the land Urarṭu.[225]

A relief from Tiglath-pileser III depicts a bird carrying off the entrails of a defeated enemy (fig. 5.17).[226] Another relief shows him holding a chain attached to a captive kneeling before him (fig. 5.18).[227] In his annals Tiglath-pileser III recorded that he captured a rebel king outside the city Sarrabanu and treated him harshly in front of his people. "Moreover, I impaled him before the gate of his city, while making (the people of) his land watch." After this demoralizing exhibition, he captured the city.[228] Many reliefs throughout Assyrian history depict the impalement of enemies (placing the victim on a large stick in the air).[229] One of the most famous examples comes from Sennacherib's relief of his conquest of Lachish (fig. 5.19).

(*batultu*) are those adolescents who have not yet been married, as illustrated in *CAD* 2:173–174, s.v. batūlu, batultu.

[225] RIMA 3:16, A.0.102.2, 53–55.

[226] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 66–67 (Or.Dr.III.SW15 = BM 118907); for a similar scene, see ibid., pl. 41 (Or.Dr.III.C21).

[227] Ibid., pl. 85.

[228] RINAP 1:119, 47, 16.

[229] For a recent study of impalement by the Assyrians, see Karen Radner, "High Visibility Punishment and Deterrent: Impalement in Assyrian Warfare and Legal Practice," *ZABR* 21 (2016): 103–28; for pictures of impalement, see *ANEP*, 128, no. 368 (BM 118903), 131, no. 373 (BM 124906); Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 332–33, no. 430 (Or.Dr.I.59 = BM 124906); De Backer, "Cruelty and Military Refinements," 20–22; band 4 of the Balawat Gates of Shalmaneser III includes the image as well; see *ANEP*, 126, no. 362; King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 21.

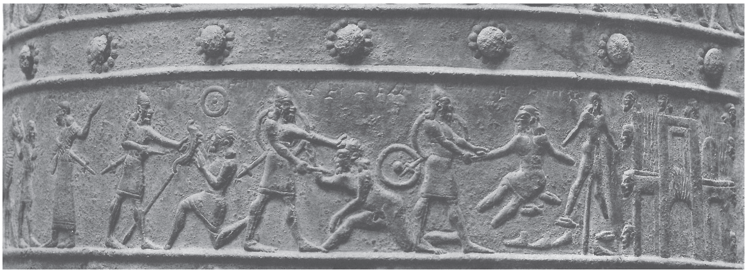

Fig. 5.16. Mutilation of prisoners by Shalmaneser III. Band 10 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 56.

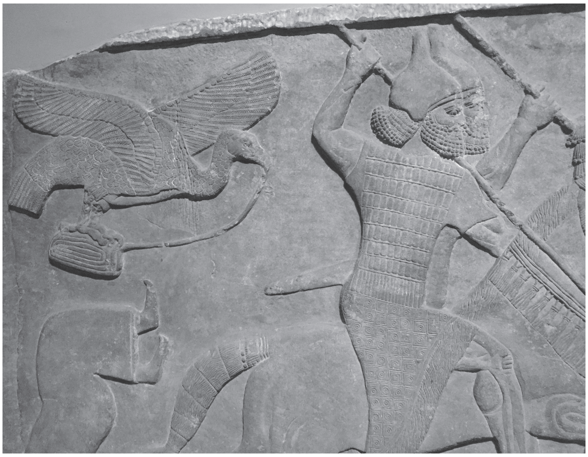

Fig. 5.17. Bird with entrails on Assyrian relief. BM 118907. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

Bel-leshir wrote to the Assyrian king (either Tiglath-pileser III or Sargon II) that a group of Ituʾeans was causing disruptions in Kurbail (SAA 19.176), so he had "subjugated the people and stamped out the [mora]le of the land." As part of his first campaign, Sennacherib killed everyone in Hirimmu and "hung their corpses on poles and placed (them) around the city."[230] Esarhaddon imprisoned Asuhili, the defeated king of Arza, near the gate in Nineveh with various animals, including bears, dogs, and pigs.[231]

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[230] RINAP 3.1:173, 22, 59–60.

[231] RINAP 4:18, 1, iii.41–42; *COS* 4.39:176.

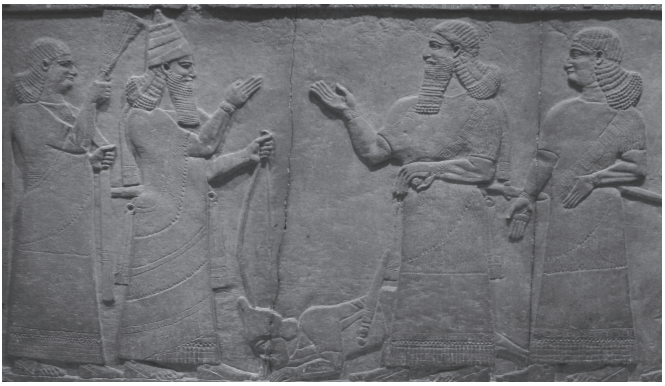

Fig. 5.18. Tiglath-pileser III with a captive. Detroit Institute of the Arts 50.32. Photo courtesy of Ted, Flickr.

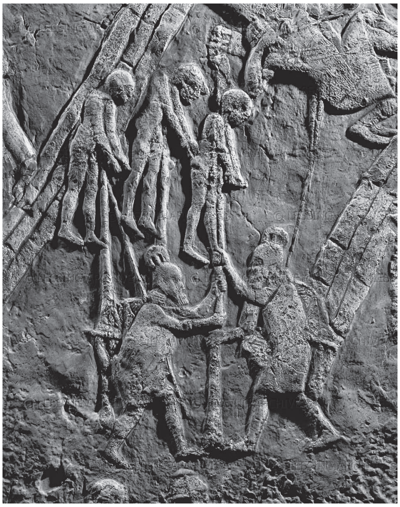

Fig. 5.19 (left). Impaling prisoner at Lachish. BM 124906. Photo courtesy of kevincellis36109, Flickr.

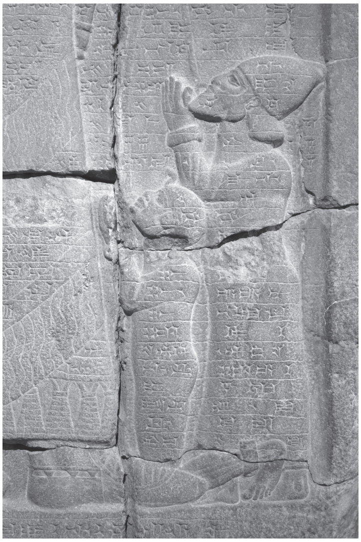

Fig. 5.20 (right). Prisoners on the Esarhaddon Stela. Pergamum Museum, Berlin. Photo courtesy of Miguel Hermoso Cuesta, Wikimedia Commons.

In a relief at Samʾal, Esarhaddon depicted himself as larger than life and holding a chain attached to two enemy kings by their lips (fig. 5.20).[232] A fragmentary letter refers to ripping out the hearts of unidentified individuals (SAA 11.144). Assurbanipal slit the tongues of those who had slandered him and fed the corpses of other captives to animals.

> Those troops, the lies of their mouths, which had spoken lies about Aššur my god, and (against) me, the prince who fears him, had plotted evil, their mouths I cut out, established their defeat. The rest of the people, who were still alive—by the *šēdu* and *lamassu* (statues), with which they had crushed Sennacherib, the father of the father who created me, now, I, crushed those people during his memorial rite (*kispu*). Their cut up flesh I fed to the dogs, the swine, the jackals (vultures?), the eagles, the birds of heaven and the fish of the deep.[233]

Assurbanipal also put various kings into kennels and on dog chains. When Ammu-ladi, a king of Kedar (near Arabia) was defeated, he was brought to Assurbanipal's presence and "a dog collar I placed upon him, and I made him guard the lock/bolt."[234] After Uaite, the king of Arabia, rebelled against him, the Assyrian king said that Assur forced the Arabian king to change his mind. However, this did not prevent a heavy penalty from being delivered against Uaite. "In order to display the praise of Aššur and the great gods, my lords, I imposed upon him a great punishment, and I placed upon him a neck stock, and I tied him up with a bear and a dog, and I made him guard the city gate within Nineveh, (named) 'The Entrance to the Place of Control of the World.'"[235]

When one particular rebel died, Assurbanipal took the dead body and "made him more dead than he was before" by cutting off his head and hanging it on the back of the dead man's twin brother.[236] Another set of rebels he forced to crush the bones of their father, which might be illustrated in one of his reliefs (fig. 5.21).[237] Sometimes even the statues of kings were defaced and beheaded, as in this inscription from Assurbanipal. "This image of Hallusu, this king of Elam, who plotted evil against Assyria, […] made hostile act against Sennacherib, king of Assyria, my grandfather, his mouth, which sneered, I cut off, his lips, which spoke insolence, I severed, his hands, which grasped a bow to attack Assyria, I broke away."[238] The military official Nabu-shumu-lishir reported to Assurbanipal on some skirmishes with Arab troops and the impalement of some of them at the place of battle (SAA 18.148). Assurbanipal also flayed enemies: "In Nineveh they threw Dunanu on a skinning-table and slaughtered him like a lamb. The other brothers of Dunanu and Šumayya I killed, their flesh I sent to be gazed at throughout the land."[239] A relief from Assurbanipal shows a captured Elamite forced to break his own bow.[240]

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[232] *ANEP*, 154. no. 447; on the propaganda goals of this relief, see Barbara Nevling Porter, "Assyrian Propaganda for the West: Esarhaddon's Stelae for Til Barsip and Samʾal," in *Essays on Syria in the Iron Age*, ed. Guy Bunnens, ANESSup 7 (Louvain: Peeters, 2000), 143–76.

[233] *COS* 4.41:188; also *ARAB* 2:304, §795; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 235.

[234] *COS* 4.41:192; also *ARAB* 2:315, §820; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 246.

[235] *COS* 4.41:192; also *ARAB* 2:314, §819; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 246.

Rape and other kinds of sexual violence is surprisingly absent from Assyrian texts and images. A curse from Esarhaddon's Succession Treaty threatened sexual violence: "May Venus, the brightest of your stars, before your eyes make your wives lie in the lap of your enemy."[241] A female nude

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[236] *ARAB* 2:312, §815; *COS* 4.41:192; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 243; Natalie Naomi May, "'In Order to Make Him Completely Dead': Annihilation of the Power of Images in Mesopotamia," in *La famille dans le Proche-Orient ancien: réalités, symbolismes, et images: Proceedings of the Fifty-Fifth Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Paris 6–9 July 2009*, ed. Lionel Marti (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014), 719; for a relief from Assurbanipal depicting a captive enemy with a human head hanging from his neck, see Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 312, no. 385 (BM 124802).

[237] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 74–77; also *ARAB* 2:335, §866; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 228; Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 288–89, no. (BM 124802); De Backer, "Cruelty and Military Refinements," 22.

[238] May, "'In Order to Make Him Completely Dead,'" 718 (K.3062); also *ARAB* 2:363, §937.

[239] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 74–75; also *ARAB* 2:335, §866; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 228; the well-known relief of the conquest of Lachish includes two prisoners being stretched out naked, presumably for flaying; see Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 338–39, no 432 (Or.Dr.I.60 = BM 124908).

[240] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 24 (BM 124941).

[241] SAA 2.6, 428–429.

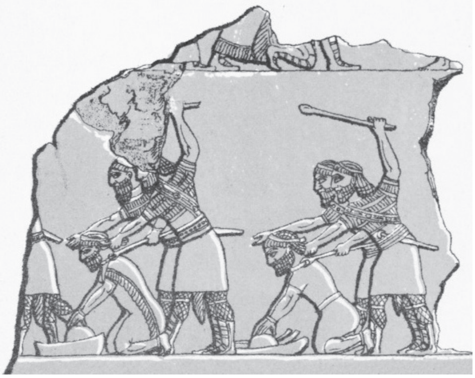

Fig. 5.21. Assyrian officers armed with maces hold high-ranking prisoners on a leash and force them to crush the bones of their ancestors. BM 124801a. Drawing from Layard, *A Second Series of the Monuments of Nineveh*, pl. 45. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

statue contains an inscription from Assur-bel-kala that reads "I made these sculptures in the provinces, cities, and *garrisons* for titillation."[242] Given the reference to garrisons, presumably one of the purposes of the statue (and others like it) was to cause the soldiers to be sexually aroused before battle.[243] However, the inscriptions and reliefs do not depict this curse being enacted against their enemies. One relief from Assurbanipal has been understood as a rape, showing an Assyrian soldier attack an Arab woman in her tent (fig. 5.22).[244] However, it appears that the woman is still fully clothed.[245] Further, since the Arabs were sometimes led by queens, the scene would fit better into Assyrian iconography if it was viewed as an attack on a leader.[246] Another possible interpretation of the relief is that the Assyrian soldiers are cutting open a pregnant woman and killing

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[242] RIMA 2:108, A.0.89.10, 4–5.

[243] Julia Assante, "Lead Inlays of Tukulti-Ninurta I: Pornography as Imperial Strategy," in Dheng, *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context*, 385–86.

[244] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:451 (BM 124927); Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 33; for more references to scholars on both sides of this debate, see the discussion in Peggy L. Day, "'Until I Come and Take You Away to a Land Like Your Own': A Gendered Look at Siege Warfare and Mass Deportation," in *Women in Antiquity: Real Women across the Ancient World*, ed. Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean MacIntosh Turfa, Rewriting Antiquity (London: Routledge, 2016), 525.

[245] Karen Radner, "How Did the Neo-Assyrian King Perceive His Land and Its Resources?," in *Rainfall and Agriculture in Northern Mesopotamia*, ed. Remko M. Jas, PIHANS 88 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2000), 234.

[246] Carly L. Crouch, *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East: Military Violence in Light of Cosmology and History*, BZAW 407 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 122; Crouch points to a letter from the time of Esarhaddon that condemns the ravishing of women by the Puqudeans as evidence that the Assyrian did not practice rape (*ABL* 275 = *SLA*

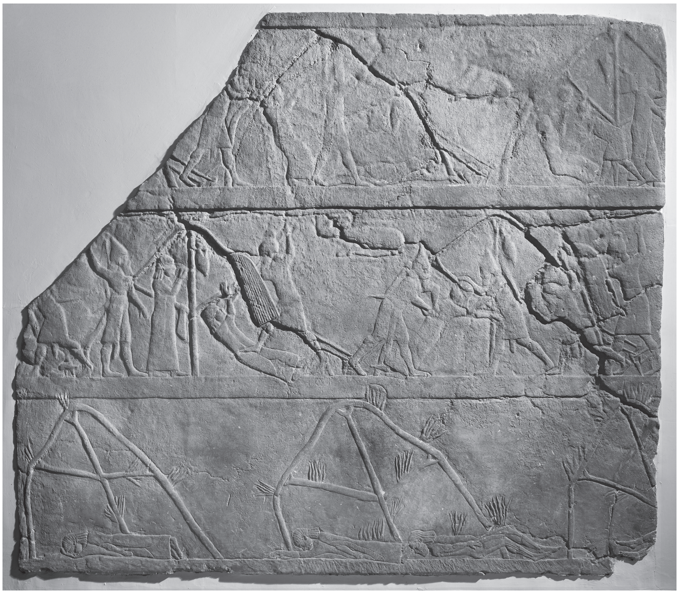

Fig. 5.22. Defeat of an Arab Queen. BM 124927. Courtesy of The Trustees of the British Museum

her unborn child.[247] One of the few other examples of sexual violence in the reliefs could be found in a group of captive women on the Balawat Gates who might have their breasts exposed.[248] The iron inlays of Tukulti-Ninurta I portraying sexual activity by captive Amorites (marked by their distinctive hats) might be a way to humiliate the prisoners (especially if the scenes are meant to depict actual events involving the captives).[249] Overall, Day suggests that mass deportation lowered the risk that female captives would be raped in captivity. "Thus I would surmise that females deported within this system ran a lower risk of sexual assault, not because of any

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78), but this argument is somewhat weakened because the letter also condemns them for attacking cities and killing men, which were common Assyrian practices.

[247] Peter Dubovský, "Ripping Open Pregnant Arab Women: Reliefs in Room L of Ashurbanipal's North Palace," *Or* 78 (2009): 394–419.

[248] Chapman, *Gendered Language of Warfare*, 47; for more discussion and other references, see Day, "Until I Come and Take You Away to a Land Like Your Own," 525–28; the relief is band 13 of the Balawat Gates; Schachner, *Bilder eines Weltreichs*, 352, no. 60b; also King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 75.

[249] Assante, "Lead Inlays of Tukulti-Ninurta I."

inherent respect of female persons per se but because the damage it would have done to the family unit did not cohere with the project of empire."[250]

The point of this cruelty was to terrify other nations into submitting to Assyria. In Sargon II's eighth campaign, when the fleeing Urartian troops told the people of Ushqaia about their defeat, the residents of Ushqaia abandoned their possessions and fled, giving the Assyrian an easy conquest of their city.[251] The official Sharru-emuranni reported to Sargon II that he had terrorized Kibatki by killing many of them to convince them to supply horses to Assyria. As a result of this terror, they became afraid and wrote to him (SAA 5.202). Qurdi-Assur-lamur wrote to an Assyrian king (most likely Tiglath-pileser III) to tell him how he convinced the people of Sidon to receive an Assyrian tax inspector who was tasked with collecting a tax from everyone who brought down wood from the mountains.[252]

> The Sidonites chased away the tax-collectors whom I appointed to the ports of trade that had been added to me in Sidon. Subsequently, I sent the Itu'eans into Mount Lebanon, and they frightened the people.
>
> Later on they (= the Sidonians) wrote to me, took the tax-collector and brought him into Sidon. I said to them as follows: "Bring down the wood, do your work there but do not sell it to the Egyptians or the Philistines. Otherwise I do not let you go up to the mountains."[253]

After beheading Sanda-uarri and Abdi-Milkūti, Esarhaddon humiliated their nobles further by hanging the heads of the dead kings on the necks of their nobles and parading them around Nineveh with the purpose of showing the power of Assur.[254] Sometime conquest led the defeated to commit suicide. A relief from Assurbanipal shows a group of conquered Babylonians; one is handing over his bow while the other two kill each other.[255] Assurbanipal describes how the psychological warfare was designed to work after he had defeated Teumman, the king of Elam, and brought his severed head to Assyria,

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[250] Day, "Until I Come and Take You Away to a Land Like Your Own," 530.

[251] *COS* 4.42:206; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 800.

[252] For more on this letter, see Shigeo Yamada, "Qurdi-Assur-Lamur: His Letters and Career," in Cogan, *Treasures on Camels' Humps*, 301–2.

[253] Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 156–57 (SAA 19.22 = ND 2715).

[254] RINAP 4:17, 1, iii.36–38; *COS* 4.39:176.

[255] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 34 (Berlin VA 210).

> Umbadarâ (and) Nabûdamiq, nobles of Teumman, king of Elam, by whose hands Teumman had dispatched (his) insolent message, whom I had detained in my presence to await my decision, saw the severed head of Teumman, their master, in Nineveh, and insanity seized hold of them. Umbadarâ tore his beard, Nabûdamiq pierced his abdomen with his girdle dagger.[256]

In order to ensure that other nations knew what Assyria was doing, the Assyrians built many statues and monuments. Upon arrival in an enemy land, Tiglath-pileser III desired to publicize his deeds. "At that time, I made a pointed iron 'arrow,' in[scribed] the mighty deeds of (the god) Aššur, my lord, on it, (and) I set (it) up at [the spring] of the city Bīt-Ištar."[257] One of the bands of the Balawat gates depicts Shalmaneser III setting up an image of himself in Urartu near Lake Van.[258] The Esarhaddon stela in the Levant played a similar role in proclaiming the power of the Assyrian king (fig. 5.20).

However, the threat of destruction and humiliation did not always work. A letter from two of the Assyrian envoys (Shamash-bunaya and Nabu-namir) tells of the refusal of Babylon to listen to their messages from Tiglath-pileser III (SAA 19.98 = ND 2632 = *COS* 4.43:219–20). The city had most likely just been taken by the usurper Mukin-zer, and the people of Babylon doubted that the Assyrian king would come to conquer the city. The Assyrian envoys were reduced to speaking their message at the city gate. Tiglath-pileser III came to Babylon two years later and conquered it.

5.3.5. Later Empires

Ninurta-kudurru-usur, a governor of the land of Suhu, defeated an Aramean tribe that attacked the land of Laqu. He claims that he did not lose a single soldier, but he killed and disfigured many of the enemy soldiers.

> I brought about a [cloud]-burst over them and from inside my chariot I blew them away (lit., "washed them away") like ch[aff]. Arrows quivered like locusts over [my] forces, (but) not one person among them

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[256] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 72–75; also *ARAB* 2:334–35, §866; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 227.

[257] RINAP 1:72, 29, 6.

[258] King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 1 (BM 124662 [band 1]).

> (my forces) fell dead in the steppe. I fell upon them (the enemy) like a blazing fire and put one thousand six hundred and sixteen of their men to the sword. Moreover, I removed the arms (and) lower lips of eighty of their men and let them go free to (spread the news of my) glory.… This is a single defeat which Ninurta-kudurrī-uṣur, governor of the land of Sūḫu and the land of Mari, inflicted upon the Ḫatallu (tribesmen). With regard to Šamaʾgamni, the *herald* of the Sarugu (clan), their leader, the dishonest servant whom the land of Sūḫu, Assyria, and my fathers *rejected*, I got hold (of him and) killed him, (thereby) easing my heart. I *stripped off* his skin like the skin of a sheep and set (it) in front of the gate of Āl-gabbāri-bānî.[259]

The Babylonians recorded little in the way of humiliating their enemies, though their enemies recorded a few examples. When Nebuchadnezzar II conquered Jerusalem in 586 BCE, he put out the eyes of the Judean king Zedekiah after he had killed his sons in front of him (2 Kgs 25:7). The Persians include only a few comments on the topic in their own literature, mostly restricted to Darius putting down rebellions. In the Bisitun Inscription Darius recorded that he treated some of the rebels harshly. For example, when he captured Fravartish, a man who claimed to be king of Media, he said that, "I cut off his nose, ears and tongue, and tore out one eye. He was held in fetters at my palace entrance; all the people saw him. After that, I impaled him at Ecbatana, and the men who were his foremost followers, those I hanged at Ecbatana in the fortress."[260] Darius I pictured himself on the Bisitun relief with his foot on one rebel and the other rebels before him linked together with chains (fig. 5.10).

Herodotus also records some examples of humiliation of Persian enemies. Cyrus intended to burn the defeated king Croesus on the pyre, but changed his mind (*Hist.* 1.86–87). After defeating the Egyptians, Cambyses dressed the daughter of the Egyptian king as a slave and paraded her in front of the king. Likewise, his son was also led to his death in front of the Egyptian king. Cambyses also abused the body of the previous Egyptian king, Amasis (*Hist.* 3.14–16). According to Herodotus, Darius impaled three thousand high-ranking Babylonians when he conquered the city (*Hist.* 3.159). Herodotus recorded a story about Persians who desired to sleep with the women of Macedon after they had surrendered to Darius;

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[259] RIMB 2:296–97, S.0.1002.2, ii.1–27.

[260] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 145–46 (DB col. II §32).

however, a deceitful plan by the king's son brought about the death of these Persians (*Hist.* 5.18–21).

5.3.6. West Semitic

These nations did not tend to humiliate their enemies (they usually suffered humiliation themselves at the hands of the empires), though there were exceptions. Rhetorical humiliation was often practiced (what David Lamb refers to as "trash talking"), such as in the duel between David and Goliath (1 Sam 17).[261] Humiliation by mutilation is attested. A Luwian inscription from Maraş (dated to around 850) describes Halparuntiyas, a king of Gurgum, abusing the people of a city he captured. "[When(?)] I captured the city Iluwasi, (of) the men I cut off the feet, but the *children* I made eunuchs to us, and thereby I exalted my image for myself."[262] When Menahem rebelled against Shallum, the king of Israel, not everyone submitted to him immediately. In reprisal, he treated them harshly. "At that time Menahem sacked Tiphsah, all who were in it and its territory from Tirzah on; because they did not open it to him, he sacked it. He ripped open all the pregnant women in it" (2 Kgs 15:16 NRSV). The humiliation of the defeated both shamed them and often was accompanied by political change.[263] Outside of Kings many examples of beheading and the cutting off of hands and feet are recorded, such as the decapitation of the rebellious Sheba (2 Sam 20:22).[264] Deuteronomy 21:10–14 prohibited battlefield rape, but permitted the soldier to marry the female captive after a month of mourning.[265] Several Old Testament texts indicate that rape was sometimes connected to warfare (Judg 5:30; Isa 13:16; Jer 8:10; Lam 5:11; Zech 14:2).

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[261] David T. Lamb, "'I Will Strike You Down and Cut off Your Head' (1 Sam 17:46): Trash Talking, Derogatory Rhetoric, and Psychological Warfare in Ancient Israel," in *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, ed. Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritchel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright, AIL 18 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 111–30.

[262] Hawkins, *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, 1:257 (Maraş 4).

[263] For a study of this theme in the Old Testament, see Tracy Maria Lemos, "Shame and Mutilation of Enemies in the Hebrew Bible," *JBL* 125 (2006): 225–41.

[264] For lists, see Joel M. LeMon, "Cutting the Enemy to Pieces: Ps 118,10–12 and the Iconography of Disarticulation," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 64–65; Debra Scoggins Ballentine, "What Ends Might Ritual Violence Accomplish? The Case of Rechab and Baanah in 2 Samuel 4," in *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible: New Perspectives*, ed. Saul M. Olyan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 14–16; on the role of ritual (along with punishment and intimidation) in cutting up corpses, see Saul M. Olyan, "The Instrumental Dimensions of Ritual Violence against Corpses in Biblical Texts," in Olyan, *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible*, 125–36.

5.4. Urbicide

> However, wherever your army goes do not cut down the trees, destroy houses, take the grain, slaughter the animals, or burn their supplies. Thus you will show the populace that you do not harbor vicious intentions.
>
> —Wu-Tzu 5

Urbicide is the destruction of cities, which was the fate of many conquered cities in the ancient Near East. Not only were they often dismantled or burned, but the surrounding fields and trees were sometimes cut down. This section will examine the destruction of cities and surrounding life support systems.

5.4.1. Egyptian

The destruction of enemy cities appears throughout Egyptian history. Very early in Egyptian history, the bottom of one side of the Narmer Palette pictures a bull standing over an enemy and goring a city (fig. 5.12). Weni recorded in his victory song that they cut down fig trees and vines and set fire to enemy cities.[266] In the Gebel Barkal Stela, Thutmose III emphasized the severe nature of his destruction of cities in Mesopotamia, including burning and destroying the crops and trees around the city, claiming that their territories were now wasted and scorched.[267] One relief of Ramesses II at Luxor shows a destroyed town, with the wall and gates falling down.[268] However, it appears that the Egyptians destroyed conquered cities less frequently than other empires, especially in the later New Kingdom. Although some of the cities conquered by the pharaohs Seti I, Ramesses II, and Merenptah exhibit destruction levels, the Egyptians were not responsible for most of this destruction.[269]

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[265] Ulrike Bechmann, “Die kriegsgefangene Frau (Dtn 21,10–14),” *BK* 60 (2005): 200–204; H. C. Washington, “‘Lest He Die in Battle and Another Man Take Her’: Violence and the Construction of Gender in the Laws of Deuteronomy 20–22,” in *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Victor Matthews, Bernard M. Levinson, and Tikva Frymer-Kensky, JSOTSup 262 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 185–213; Carolyn Pressler, *The View of Women Found in the Deuteronomic Family Laws*, BZAW 216 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1993), 9–15; for more on the treatment of female prisoners in the Old Testament, see Susan Niditch, “War, Women, and Defilement in Numbers 31,” *Semeia* 61 (1993): 39–57; Niditch, *War in the Hebrew Bible*, 78–89; Ahuva Ashman, “Women in the Bible as Victims of War” [Hebrew], *BM* 48 (2003): 169–83; Rebekah Josberger, “For Your Good Always: Restraining the Rights of the Victor for the Well-Being of the Vulnerable (Deut 21:10–14),” in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block*, ed. Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth J. Turner (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 165–88.

[266] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 167.

The Egyptians often destroyed the trees and crops near the cities of their enemies, such as described in the Thutmose III text above.[270] Part of the victory song of Weni included the exaltation that at the enemy's city the army "had cut down its figs, its vines."[271] Sesostris III recorded on a boundary stela documenting a conquest of the Nubians that "My Person has seen it—it is not an untruth; for I have plundered their women, and carried off their underlings, gone to their wells, driven off their bulls, torn up their corn, and put fire to it."[272] A soldier during the reign of Amenemhat I (Twelfth Dynasty) left graffiti that emphasized environmental damage in Nubia: "Then I went upstream in victory, slaughtering the Nubian in his (own) land, and came back downstream stripping crops, and cutting down the rest of their trees so that I could put fire to their homes, as is done against a rebel against the king."[273] The relief from Ramesses II showing the devastated city includes destroyed fruit trees near the city.[274]

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[267] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 2 (Gebel Barkal Stela); also in *COS* 2.2B:14–18; *ANET*, 238, 240.

[268] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:65; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 277.

[269] For more details, see Michael G. Hasel, *Domination and Resistance: Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant, ca. 1300–1185 B.C.*, PAe 11 (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 118–93.

[270] Michael G. Hasel, *Military Practice and Polemic: Israel's Laws of Warfare in Near Eastern Perspective* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2005), 109–13; Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 75–83; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 310–14.

[271] *AEL* 1:20.

[272] Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt*, 45 (Berlin Museum 1157); *AEL* 1:119.

[273] Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt*, 95–96.

[274] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:65; Hasel, *Military Practice and Polemic*, 109; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 277.

5.4.2. Hittite

The Hittite kings frequently record the destruction of various conquered cities.[275] Cities were burned when they did not intend to occupy the city or they needed to demonstrate a point.[276] Hattusili I recorded that "I went to Alalḫa and I destroyed it."[277] Hittite kings also sometimes burned defeated cities.[278] For example, Mursili II recorded the following: "On the next morning, however I came back to Iyaḫrišša and Iyaḫrišša, the town, I burned down. Together with the NAM.RA, however, I seized cattle (and) sheep."[279] Hattusili I burned cities so the Storm God in heaven would be able to see the smoke.[280] Finally, the surrounding land of a city could also be destroyed, such as when Hattusili I destroyed the countryside around Sanahuitta but did not destroy the city itself.[281] The Kaska frequently destroyed Hittite land, a concern often addressed in letters to and from the Hittite king (*HKM* 50; *CTH* 188).

One specific form of destroying a captured city prohibited the resettlement of certain conquered cities.[282] The earliest references are in the

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[275] Ahmet Ünal, "Studien über das hethitische Kriegswesen II: Verba delendi ḫarnink-/ḫarganu-'vernichten, zugrunde richten,'" *SMEA* 24 (1984): 71–85.

[276] Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 93.

[277] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 47 (*KBo* 10.2 obv. 15–16; *CTH* 4.II.A).

[278] Ahmet Ünal, "Untersuchungen zur Terminologie der hethischen Kriegsführung I: 'Verbrennen, in Brand stecken' als Kriegstechnik," *Or* 52 (1983): 164–80.

[279] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 47 (*KBo* 4.4 rev. III 40′–42′; *CTH* 61.II.5.B).

[280] *ANEHST*, 221 (*CTH* 4.II.A).

[281] *ANEHST* 219 (*CTH* 4.II.A); for more on the general topic, see S. Hutter-Braunsar, "Die Terminologie der Zerstörung eroberten Acker-und Siedlungslandes in hethitischen Königsinschriften," in *Der orientalische Mensch und seine Beziehungen zur Umwelt: Beiträge zum 2. Grazer morgenländischen Symposion (2.–5. März 1989)*, ed. Bernhard Scholz, Grazer morgenländische Studien 2 (Graz: GrazKult, 1989), 201–18.

[282] Stanley Gevirtz, "Jericho and Shechem: A Religio-Literary Aspect of City Destruction," *VT* 13 (1963): 52–62; R. T. Ridley, "To Be Taken with a Pinch of Salt: The Destruction of Carthage," *CP* 81 (1986): 140–46; Hanna Roszkowska-Mutschler, "'… and on Its Site I Sowed Cress …': Some Remarks on the Execration of Defeated Enemy Cities by the Hittite Kings," *JACiv* 7 (1992): 1–12; Giuseppe F. del Monte, "The Hittite *Herem*," in *Memoriae Igor M. Diakonoff*, ed. Leonid K. Kogan et al., Babel und Bibel 2, Orientalia et Classica 8 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 21–45.

Proclamation of Anitta, who devoted the cities of Ullamma, Tenenda, and Harkiuna to the Storm God. He also later recorded sowing cress over the city of Hattusa and uttering a curse against anyone who would rebuild it. "When (Hattusa) finally suffered famine, Siusmi handed it over to Halmasuit: I took it at night with force and on its site I sowed weeds (ZÀ.AḪ.LI). Whoever becomes king after me and resettles Hattusa, may Tarhuna of Heaven hit him!"[283] An inscription from Hattusili I recorded a similar event. "I destroyed the land of Ulma and on its site I sowed weeds (ZÀ.AḪ.LI), then I transported seven (images of) deities into the temple of the Sungoddess of Arina."[284] The word ZÀ.AḪ.LI is usually translated "weed" or "cress."[285] Ideas about the identity of this plant include *Lolium temulentum* (which cannot be separated from grain and can cause serious poisoning if ingested in large enough amounts), *Cuscuta europaea* (a parasite that takes the nutrients from the grain), and fennel.[286] However, it could also be a metaphor for destruction rather than a literal plant. The threat of consecrating a city appeared sufficient to quell some rebellions. In his second year, Mursili II threatened two cities with destroying their city and dedicating it to the Storm God; it was sufficiently intimidating that they submitted to him.[287] Mursili II consecrated a Kaska city that had attacked him. "[And] the city Timmuḫala, the city Tiyaššilta, and [the city Kar]aššuwa I burned. [Furthermore,] because the city Timmuḫala provoked(?) me, [(is) furthermore] an unfavorably situated site, I consecrated Timmuḫala [to the] Storm-god, my lord, and pronounced it sacrosanct. [And I] set it(s) boundaries, and [no] man will inhabit it."[288]

The text of a ritual describing this process of sanctification has also been found. The ritual begins with the Old Woman offering animals to the gods of the enemy country, at which point the king offers wine to the enemy town and says the following (ll. iii.11–28):[289]

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[283] Del Monte, "Hittite *Herem*," 23 (StBoT 18 12:45–51; *CTH* 1.A).

[284] Ibid., 24 (*KBo* 10.2 obv. 1.36–38; *CTH* 4.II.A).

[285] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 53–54.

[286] W. Dörfler et al., "Environment and Economy in Hittite Anatolia," in Genz, *Insights into Hittite History and Archaeology*, 113–14.

[287] Del Monte, "Hittite *Herem*," 25 (*KUB* 14.15 obv. i 12′–21′; *CTH* 61.II.2.A).

[288] Gevirtz, "Jericho and Shechem," 59 (*KUB* 19.37 ii 13–19; *CTH* 61.II.9.A); for another reference to Mursili II consecrating a city to a deity, see del Monte, "Hittite *Herem*," 26 (*KBo* 16.18 iii.1–8; *CTH* 61.III.5).

[289] Del Monte, "Hittite *Herem*," 40–43 (*CTH* 423); other translations in Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 53; Doris Prechel, "'Wenn die

> This town was aggressive towards me. I have invoked Tešub, my Lord, and Tešub, my Lord, has done my soul's desire and has fulfilled my soul's desire; he handed it over to me and I have desolated it and made it sacred. As long as heaven (and) earth and mankind will be, in future no son of man may inhabit it! [I have offered] it to Tešub, my Lord, together with fields, farmyards, vineyards, and [x]-*dana*-: let, Tešub, my Lord, your bulls Šeri (and) Ḫurri [make it] their own grazing-land, let Šeri and Ḫurri graze in it for evermore! He who nevertheless will inhabit it and will take the grazing-land away from the bulls of Tešub, Šeri (and) Ḫurri, let him be adverse party to Tešub, my Lord! If some son of man will inhabit that town, either [one] household or two households, or some contingent of infantry (and) chariotry [will] inhabit it, [may] my Lord [destroy] that household or those two households or the contingent of infantry (and) [chariotry]! If a man [… will inhabit it …]!

The king then performs various other ritual actions, continuing to nourish the gods of the enemy lands. The final step of the ritual is to perform an oracle to ensure the gods will accept this consecration (which is then double-checked) (ll. iv.8–19).

> If you, Gods, take for approval that this matter should be dealt with in this way and I, My Majesty, shall have nothing to fear in this matter for myself, my household and my land, if he who will inhabit the enemy town that I offer will turn cause of anger for Tešub, my Lord, and you, (Tešub), will make war upon him and destroy him and you will make his settlement an abomination; (if) you, Gods, take for approved that this matter should be dealt with in this way, let the liver be favourable.

5.4.3. Early Mesopotamian

Many cities were destroyed in early Mesopotamia. The earliest texts emphasize the destruction of the walls of defeated towns. Sargon the Great recorded that after he conquered Uruk he destroyed its walls, a common feature of his victories.[290] Naram-Sin acted in a similar way against Kish. "Further, he filled the Euphrates River with their (bodies), conquered the city of Kiš, and destroyed its wall. Further, he made the river/canal go forth

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Soldaten aus dem Lande ziehen…' Rituelle Kriegstaktik im Ḫatti-Reich," in Gundlach, *Militärgeschichte des pharaonischen Ägypten*, 384.

[290] RIME 2:10, E2.1.1.1, 12–22.

in its (the city's) midst and struck down 2,525 men within the city."[291] Shu-Sin also "turned their established cities and villages into (ruin) heaps. He destroyed their walls."[292] A hymn about Shulgi said that, "The king, after he destroyed the city, ruined the city walls."[293]

Later texts also include references to burning cities. The Assyrian king Shamshi-Adad told his son Yasmah-Adad: "… Destroy … Set the citadel on fire. Make the inhabitants leave the city; expel them towards here, the interior of the Country; destroy that city with fire (…)."[294] Yarim-Adad reported similar news to Zimri-Lim: "(…) and his troops triumphed over the country of Mutiabal. They [deported] the entire population, destroyed their [houses] and set fire."[295] Yahdun-Lim wrote that after conquering three kings, he "made a heap of their corpses, destroyed their ramparts and made them into ruined mounds."[296]

A few texts speak of destroying trees and crops.[297] URU-KA-gina, a king of Lagash, complained about an attack by the king of Gisha (Umma) that included burning the crops of the fields (he also destroyed several temples).[298] A hymn to Shulgi speaks of destroying crops. "In its cultivated fields of 'shining' barley, he caused weeds to grow, He destroyed its wide and large trees (with) the axe, He tore down its 'trees of riches' by their crown, He uprooted its small trees, In its orchards (and) gardens, where the 'honey' of fig trees had been produced, he made weeds grow."[299] Ishme-Dagan wrote to his brother Yasmah-Adad about a siege he was conducting; he had burned down the orchards of the enemy, but was enjoying delightful food himself.

> Now I have Mashum [carry out] my strategy and I have burned down the surrounding area of Amursakkum for a distance of one double-hour (ca. 6 miles/10 kilometers) […] (one word) and I have destroyed the provi-

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[291] RIME 2:107, E2.1.4.6, iv.25′–45′.

[292] RIME 3.2:304, E3.2.1.4.3. iv.11–14.

[293] Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 84–85 (Šulgi D, 344).

[294] Rovira, "Share Them Out …," 26 (ARM 1.39 = LAPO 17.471).

[295] Ibid. (ARM 26.365).

[296] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 146 (ARM 10.84 = LAPO 18.1232 = Sasson 1.8.c.iii).

[297] Steven W. Cole, "The Destruction of Orchards in Assyrian Warfare," in Parpola, *Assyria 1995*, 30–31.

[298] RIME 1:278, E1.9.9.5, vii.7–9.

[299] Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 84–85 (Šulgi D, 338–342).

> sions of the enemy. Something else: I am dining on pears from Nawila; they are delicious! Herewith I have some pears and pistachios from the Sindjar Mountains, the first fruits of the year, brought to you.[300]

Shamshi-Adad ordered his son Yasmah-Adad to destroy the grain of a city so it would become submissive to him (ARM 1.103 = LAPO 17.469). An apodosis of an omen described destroying orchards: "You will cut down the date (grove) of the city which you go to besiege, and then you will depart for home."[301] A Mari letter recorded such an event. "Shadun-laba wrote to me saying: 'Because I cut off the head of Ishme-Adad, the enemy of my lord, and had it sent to my lord, the men of Hurra and the man of Shinah have come and cut down my orchards!'"[302] In another letter, Zimri-Adad reported to his lord that "The Babylonian troops made an incursion into the land of Ešnuna and burned the grain."[303] Ipiq-Eshtar, a king of Malgium, described an enemy cutting down an orchard. "At that time all the land in its entirety came down, made a great clamour, and performed an evil deed. It destroyed the sanctuary[y], the dwelling of the goddess, great Bēlet-Ilī, and cut down its awe-inspiring height (of trees), her orchard."[304] Various texts from Ebla also recorded the uprooting of crops.[305] Fighting had long-term ecological effects as well, though they are often difficult to detect. Radner argues that fighting in Qattunan during the time of Zimri-Lim prevented the normal attention being given to pest control, which allowed locusts to multiply and devastate the crops the following year.[306]

5.4.4. Assyrian

As expected, the Assyrians destroyed cities with devastating results. A relief of Shalmaneser III shows a city of Urartu burning after the Assyrians captured it (fig. 5.23). Tiglath-pileser I often boasted of harsh treatment of captured cities with the formulaic expression burning (*šarāpu*),

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[300] *ANEHST*, 118 (ARM 4.42 = LAPO 17.499).

[301] Cole, "Destruction of Orchards in Assyrian Warfare," 31 (YOS 10 41:74–75).

[302] Dalley, *Mari and Karana*, 144 (ARM 2.33 = LAPO 583).

[303] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 458 (ARM 27.141).

[304] RIME 4:670, E4.11.1.1, 18–24.

[305] Archi, "Men at War in the Ebla Period," 16.

[306] Karen Radner, "Fressen und gefressen werden: Heuschrecken im Alten Orient," *WO* 34 (2004): 11–13.

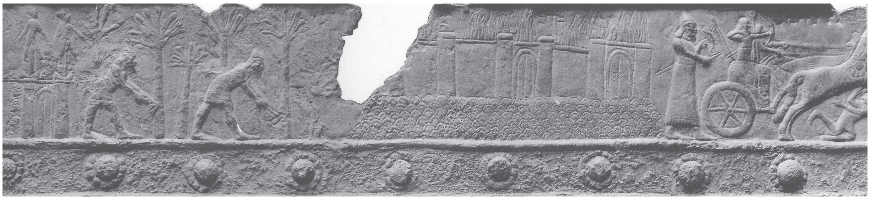

Fig. 5.23. Shalmaneser III burning an Urartian city and cutting down trees. Band 2 (BM 124659) of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 8.

razing (*napālu*), and destroying (*naqāru*) cities.[307] In Sargon II's eighth campaign, he destroyed Ushqaia.

> The massive wall, the base of which was founded on bedrock and was eight cubits thick, beginning at its parapet and going all the way down to its deepest foundations, I demolished completely and left it at ground level. I set fire to the houses inside, their lengthy timbers I turned into ashes. I burned 115 settlements in its environs like brushwood, I covered the face of the sky with the smoke of them, like a stormcloud. I made its territory as if a deluge had laid it waste.[308]

A relief from Sennacherib shows Assyrian soldiers taking apart the wall of a town and throwing down the debris to the ground below.[309] Esarhaddon recorded the extreme destruction of Sidon. "I leveled (*šapānu*) Sidon, his stronghold, which is situated in the midst of the sea, like a flood, tore out its wall(s) and its dwelling(s), and threw (them) into the sea; and I (even) made the site where it stood disappear."[310] When attacking the Arabs who lacked a permanent city, the Assyrians destroyed their tents instead, as seen in a relief of Assurbanipal (fig. 5.24).[311]

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[307] See, e.g., RIMA 2:14, A.0.87.1, ii.1.

[308] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 800–801; also *COS* 4.42:206.

[309] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 397, no. 509 (Or.Dr.VI.2); for more examples, see Jacob L. Wright, "Urbicide: The Ritualized Killing of Cities in the Ancient Near East," in Olyan, *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible*, 151–52.

[310] RINAP 4:16, 1, ii.68–70; also *COS* 4.39:175–76.

[311] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 33 (BM 124927); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:451.

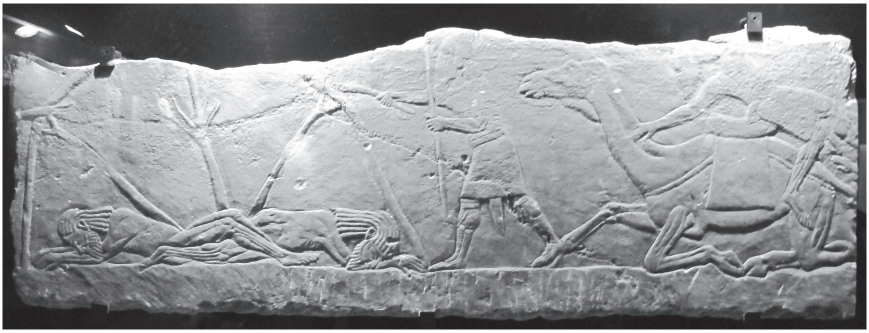

Fig. 5.24. Assyrians destroying Arab tents. Gregorian Egyptian Museum, Vatican. Photo courtesy of Sailko, Wikimedia Commons.

Sennacherib's destruction of Babylon became infamous. In one version of the destruction, he said that he removed the soil of Babylon and had the Euphrates River carry it to the sea. When the country of Dilmun saw the soil, they submitted to Sennacherib and helped him demolish Babylon. He also took some of the soil from Babylon and brought it to an *akītu*-house he had built in Assyria.[312] Like Naram-Sin (see §5.4.3), Sennacherib used water when destroying a city, as described in this version of the destruction of Babylon.[313]

> I destroyed, devastated, (and) burned with fire the city, and (its) buildings, from its foundations to its crenellations. I removed the brick(s) and earth, as much as there was, from the (inner) wall and outer wall, the temples, (and) the ziggurat, (and) I threw (it) into the Araḫtu river. I dug canals into the center of that city and (thus) leveled their site with water. I destroyed the outlines of its foundations and (thereby) made its destruction surpass that of the Deluge. So that in the future, the site of that city and (its) temples will be unrecognizable, I dissolved it (Babylon) in water and annihilated (it), (making it) like a meadow.[314]

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[312] RINAP 3.2:248, 168, 36–44.

[313] In another example, Assurbanipal destroyed Sha-pi-bel by flooding it; see *ARAB* 2:300, §788; *COS* 4.41:187; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 228.

[314] RINAP 3.2:316–17, 223, 50–54.

The Assyrians often cut down trees and other important aspects of life support systems around enemy cities.[315] A broken relief of Assurnasirpal II shows Assyrian soldiers cutting down trees, as do reliefs from Shalmaneser III and Sennacherib.[316] When a group of cities decided to follow Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II) instead of the Assyrians, Sargon II destroyed their land. "I let my army eat (the fruit) of their orchards; the date palms, their mainstay, the orchards, the wealth of their province, I cut down."[317] After destroying the cities of Ellipi (when their king fled the country), Sennacherib cut down their orchards and destroyed their fields.[318] The destruction of trees was not invariably performed; a date palm tree remains standing after a city was conquered in a relief from Tiglath-pileser III.[319] It appears that sometimes the destruction of the trees and the crops operated as a kind of face-saving measure when the Assyrians were unable to conquer a city.[320] However, this was not always the case; as seen in the texts above sometimes the destruction of orchards was simply part of the Assyrian terror, showing what would happen to any who would resist the Assyrian king.[321] As had happened earlier during the time of Zimri-Lim, it appears that several locust plagues happened in the year after a war, when the insects were not able to be properly watched.[322]

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[315] The topic has received great attention due to the interest in possible links between Deut 20:19–20 and Assyrian siege tactics; see Erika Bleibtreu, "Zerstörung der Umwelt durch Bäumefällen und Dezimierung des Löwenbestandes in Mesopotamien," in Scholz, O*rientalische Mensch und seine Beziehungen zur Umwelt*, 219–33; Bustenay Oded, "Cutting Down Orchards in Descriptions of Campaigns in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions—The Historiographic Aspect," *JACiv* 12 (1997): 93–98; Cole, "Destruction of Orchards in Assyrian Warfare"; Hasel, *Military Practice and Polemic*, 60–76; Jeremy D. Smoak, "Assyrian Siege Warfare Imagery and the Background of a Biblical Curse," in Kelle, *Writing and Reading War*, 83–91; Jacob L. Wright, "Warfare and Wanton Destruction: A Reexamination of Deuteronomy 20:19–20 in Relation to Ancient Siegecraft," *JBL* 127 (2008): 423–58; Nili Wazana, "Are Trees of the Field Human? A Biblical War Law (Deuteronomy 20:19–20) and Neo-Assyrian Propaganda," in Cogan, *Treasures on Camels' Humps*, 274–95.

[316] Assurnasirpal II: Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 114 (Or.Dr.III.SW5). Shalmaneser III: King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 8 (BM 124659 [band 2]). Sennacherib: Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 49, no. 45 (Or.Dr.IV.41), 382, no. 489 (Or.Dr.IV.26), 408–9, no. 520 (Or.Dr.I.37), 460–61, no. 637 (Or.Dr.IV.56).

[317] *ARAB* 2:16, §32; also Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 330.

[318] RINAP 3.1:52, 3, 27–29.

[319] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 4 (BM 118882).

[320] Oded, "Cutting Down Orchards."

[321] Wright, "Warfare and Wanton Destruction," 441–45.

A few Assyrian texts describe a symbolic cursing of a city after it was destroyed. The Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser I covered Hunusu in stones and scattered bronze lightning bolts on it that were inscribed with a description of his victory and a warning not to rebuild the city.

> The three walls which were constructed with baked brick and the entire city I razed, destroyed, turned into a ruin hill and strewed *ṣīpu*-stones over it. I made bronze lightning bolts (and) inscribed on them (a description of) the conquest of the lands which with the god Aššur, my lord, I conquered (and a warning) not to occupy that city and not to rebuild its wall. On that (site) I built a house of baked brick and put inside those bronze lightning bolts.[323]

Shalmaneser I completely destroyed Arinu (which he called a holy city) when it rebelled against him and Assur. "I captured (and) destroyed that city and sowed salty plants (*kuddimmu*) over it. I gathered (some of) its earth and made a heap of it at the gate of my city, Aššur, for posterity."[324] Assurbanipal laid waste to the land of Elam with salt and cress.

> The sarcophagi of their former and later kings who did not fear Aššur and Ištar, my lords, who had harried the kings my fathers, I ravaged, I destroyed, I caused to see the sun. Their bones I took to Assyria. I imposed disquiet (upon) their spirits. I barred food offerings (and) libation. For a march of a month, twenty-five days, I laid waste the districts of Elam. Salt (and) cress I scattered over them. [325]

5.4.5. Later Empires

The enemies of Ninurta-kudurri-usur, a governor in Suhu in the early first millennium, threatened to cut down his fruit trees.[326] According to the

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[322] Radner, "Fressen und gefressen werden," 13–19.

[323] RIMA 2:24, A.0.87.1, vi.11–21.

[324] RIMA 1:183, A.0.77.1, 50–51; for a similar use of this motif, see also RIMA 1:136, A.0.76.3.

[325] Gevirtz, "Jericho and Shechem," 58; also *ARAB* 2:310, §§810–11; *COS* 4.41:191; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 241.

[326] RIMB 2:295, S.0.1002.2, 26–27.

Old Testament, the Babylonians destroyed much of the city of Jerusalem, including burning the temple and many other houses and breaking down the walls of the city (2 Kgs 25:9–10). Nabopolassar recorded that in his battles with the Assyrians he "[turned] my ene[my's land] into tells and ruin heaps."[327] In the Babylonian Chronicles, Nabopolassar is said to have burned many town in the region of Urashtu.[328] Although Cyrus preserved the walls of Babylon when he captured it, the later Persian king Darius tore down the gates of the city when he conquered it (Herodotus, *Hist.* 3.159). The Persians also destroyed cities in the west as part of their campaign there under Darius (*Hist.* 6.96).

5.4.6. West Semitic

The Amarna letters frequently refer to grain being taken by enemy troops.[329] Rib-Hadda once complained to Pharaoh Akhenaten that he was attacked by a Habiru who "has attacked me (and) my orchards."[330] Other Amarna letters describe the burning of cities (EA 174, 185, 186). The historical situation behind this letter is unknown, but a city commander reported that a city was captured, its grain burned on the threshing floor, and its vineyards destroyed.[331] Mesha devoted (חרם) the city Nebo to Ashtar Chemosh, but the text does not record what exactly that entailed.[332] A Luwian text from Karahöyük (dated to around 1150) records giving cities to a deity. "For me the Storm-God of the land POCULUM was reverenced in every place with … (?), and in my lands I(?) hand(ed) over the cities to the Storm-God of the land POCULUM."[333]

Several texts in the Old Testament refer to town and life support system destruction.[334] After the Israelites, Judeans, and Edomites defeated Mesha, they destroyed his towns, threw stones on the fields, stopped up the springs of water, and cut down trees (2 Kgs 3:25). When Jehoash defeated the Judean army at Beth-Shemesh, he went to Jerusalem and tore down four hundred cubits of the wall (2 Kgs 14:13). Outside of Kings, several cities are destroyed in dramatic ways. The book of Joshua tells the story of the conquest of many cities, but only three cities are said to be burned; Jericho (Josh 6:24), Ai (Josh 8:28), and Hazor (Josh 11:11). According to Judges, Abimelech destroyed Shechem and sowed it with salt (Judg 9:45).

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[327] Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar*, 71.

[328] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 225.

[329] See Hasel, *Military Practice and Polemic*, 98–100.

[330] Moran, *Amarna Letters*, 165 (EA 91); see also Wright, "Warfare and Wanton Destruction," 430.

[331] *COS* 3.45FF:109–10 (RS 19.011).

[332] Mesha Inscription, ll. 14–18.

[333] Hawkins, *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, 1:290.

[334] Wright, "Warfare and Wanton Destruction"; Wright, "Urbicide," 152–60.

5.5. Extermination of Enemies

In one of the more brutal parts of warfare in the ancient Near East, enemy prisoners and noncombatants were sometimes killed after the battle. However, these accounts are complicated by a variety of factors. In a world where most males served in the military at some point in their life, defining who qualifies as a noncombatant is not straightforward. It is also often difficult to determine whether the victims were killed during a battle or after it. Finally, it is also challenging to determine the historical veracity of many of these accounts, as they often functioned rhetorically to warn other nations about the potential results of rebellion. While it appears that the empires engaged in mass killing after battle partly because they had a greater reputation to uphold, the smaller nations also engaged in the practice (though their reasons are not as clear).[335]

5.5.1. Egyptian

Overall, it appears that the practice of killing prisoners after a battle was rare in Egypt.[336] Thutmose II recorded that his army executed all the males after a victory against Nubia. “This army of his majesty overthrew those barbarians; they did [not] let live anyone among the males, according to all the command of his majesty, except one of those children of the chief of wretched Kush, who was taken away alive as a living prisoner with their people to his majesty."[337] Piye was angry with his generals for allowing an enemy to escape: "Have they allowed a remnant to remain among the troops of Lower Egypt so as to let go an escapee among them to relate his campaign, not killing them to exterminate the last of them?"[338] However, this claim might not have been as exhaustive as it sounds. A similar statement from Seti I clarifies the message after a battle against the Shasu that "all" did not necessarily mean "every last person": "His Majesty killed them all at once, he did not leave heirs among them. The one who escaped from his hand is a living captive, carried off to Egypt."[339]

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[335] Hans Van Wees, “Genocide in the Ancient World,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies*, ed. Donald Bloxham and A. Dirk Moses (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 256. For the argument that the smaller states conducted mass killing because they could not usefully employ slave labor, see Lauren A. S. Monroe, *Josiah’s Reform and the Dynamics of Defilement: Israelite Rites of Violence and the Making of a Biblical Text* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 55–56; however, for counter examples, see Tracy Maria Lemos, “Dispossessing Nations: Population Growth, Scarcity, and Genocide in Ancient Israel and Twentieth-Century Rwanda,” in Olyan, *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible*, 43.

[336] Heagren, “Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt,” 307.

Pharaohs sometimes emphasized the completeness of their victories both through the submissiveness and the nonexistence of the enemy (sometimes in the same inscription), but their nonexistence might relate to the loss of their rights after being defeated by the pharaoh rather than their death.[340] In this inscription from Karnak Ramesses II caused his enemies to be nonexistent and submissive at the same time.

> [The Good god], who returns when he has triumphed, with the chiefs o[f] every [foreign land]. He has trampled down the rebellious foreign lands which [had] violated his boundaries. He is [like Montu] when he has taken his mace, and like Horus in [his] panoply; his bow is with him like Bastet, his arrow like the [Son] of Nut—no foreign lands can stand up <be>fore him. Dread of him is in their hearts, and all rebellious foreign lands become submissive. He causes them to cease, while standing on the battlefield.[341]

One of the most common motifs in Egyptian reliefs involves the pharaoh smiting his enemies (figs. 5.25 and 5.26).[342] Some have suggested these

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[337] *ARE* 2:50.

[338] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 480.

[339] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, 21; also *COS* 2.4A:24.

[340] Lorton, "Terminology Related to the Laws of Warfare," 54.

[341] "Karnak, Great Wall (S. Wall): E. Side, Bottom Register," *RITA* 2.10:34; for more on the use of annihilation terminology in the context of survivors, see Hasel, *Domination and Resistance*, 63–65.

[342] For surveys of this motif, see Emma Swan Hall, *The Pharaoh Smites His Enemies: A Comparative Study*, MÄS 44 (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1986); Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, 88–92; for other examples of the image, see *ANEP*, 91–92, 102, nos. 293 (BM EA55586), 295, 296, 312; for a picture of a smiting relief with the color partially preserved, see http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394h.

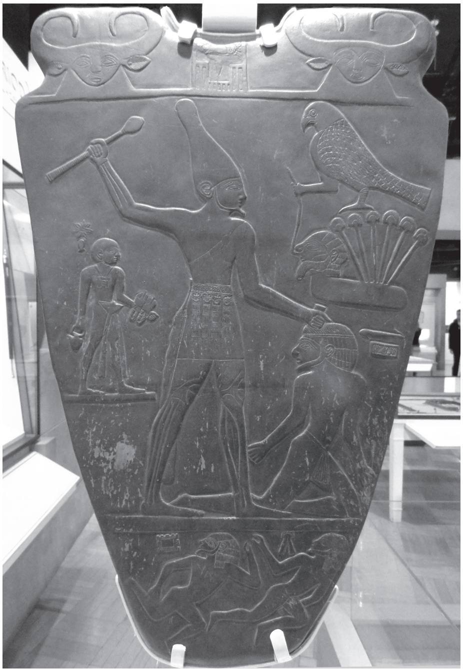

Fig. 5.25. Narmer smiting the enemy. Cast of Narmer Palette in Royal Ontario Museum (original in Cairo Museum). Photo courtesy of Dadeort, Wikimedia Commons.

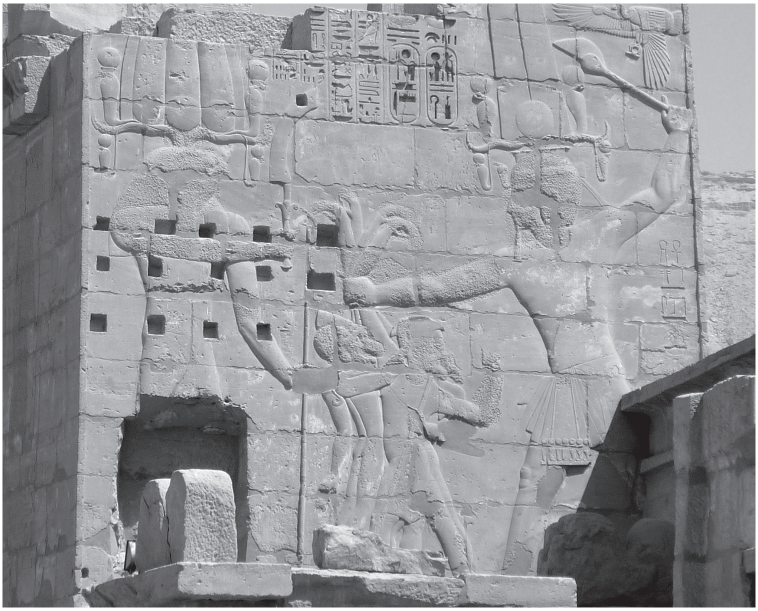

Fig. 5.26. Ramesses III smiting the enemy. Medinet Habu, Egypt. Photo courtesy of Rémih, Wikimedia Commons.

reliefs indicate that the pharaoh literally killed his enemies in ritual ceremonies in Egypt. In particular, Alan Schulman looks at the motif as it appears in private stelae and argues that its presence in such a nonroyal setting can only be explained by viewing the smiting as an actual ceremony in a temple witnessed by those who constructed these stelae and who sought to commemorate these ceremonies because the pharaoh gave them rewards as part of those ceremonies.[343] However, others have argued that it was more likely a symbolic killing (perhaps serving an apotropaic function) since no texts describe the ritual killing of prisoners.[344] For example, the exact same smiting scene of a Libyan king and his family is reproduced by several pharaohs, leading us to expect that it had become part of the royal myth rather than an actual event.[345]

Smiting the enemy by common soldiers also appears in reliefs. Ramesses II's victory at Qadesh (as recorded at Abydos) includes an Egyptian holding an unarmed enemy by the hair in his right hand and holding up a weapon in his left hand to smite him.[346] The smiting scene is also sometimes attributed to the pharaoh while he is still in his chariot in the middle of a battle.[347] Other Egyptians cut off the hands of unarmed enemies or are cutting their throat.[348] The use of the motif in battle might provide evidence for its historical practice after battle.

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[343] Alan R. Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards: Some Historical Scenes on New Kingdom Private Stelae*, OBO 75 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1988), 39–52; Schulman notes that the motif appeared in royal contexts throughout all Egyptian history, but it appeared in private stelae only from the Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasty (8–9).

[344] H. Te Velde, "Human Sacrifice in Ancient Egypt," in *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice*, ed. Jan N. Bremmer, Studies in the History and Anthropology of Religion 1 (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 133–34; Hall, *Pharaoh Smites His Enemies*, 16; for a recent discussion and bibliography, see Anthony J. Spalinger, "Egyptian New Kingdom Triumphs: A First Blush," in *Rituals of Triumph in the Mediterranean World*, ed. Anthony Spalinger and Jeremy Armstrong, CHANE 63 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 100, 115–16.

[345] Schulman accounts for this by arguing that it had its basis in a historical event; see Schulman, *Ceremonial Execution and Public Rewards*, 47–48; on the other hand, Ritner (who includes a picture of the relief) argues that this kind of copying was restricted to this particular case; see Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 524–25.

[346] Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 283; a soldier of Tutankhamen performs the same deed against a Nubian chief; see ibid., 238.

[347] For an example with the pharaoh holding a *khopesh* sword, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:164; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 13; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 259.

5.5.2. Hittite

Like the Egyptians, killing enemies after a battle is infrequent in Hittite literature. One possible example appears in Tudhaliya II's treaty with Sunashshura of Kizzuwatna, when he commanded him to kill anyone who rebelled against the Hittite king, but this is not closely connected to warfare.[349]

5.5.3. Early Mesopotamian

A few examples of postbattle extermination are found in early Mesopotamia. Shulgi boasts concerning an enemy town that "The young ones of the foreign land, I will make them embark on ships, The adults I will kill in revenge; (Even) those, whom I will not have killed, and those whom I will not have spread out$^{?}$, they will not live long."[350] In a brief inscription, Rimush recounted annihilating the enemy after a battle. "Further, he expelled 3,600 men from their two cities and annihilated them (*u-śu-ṣí-am-ma a-na kà-ra-śi-im*)."[351] Although the word *karaš* is often translated "annihilate," it could also be translated "camp."[352] The same word (and the same ambiguity) appears in a Mari letter by Shibtu (the wife of Zimri-Lim) reporting a prophecy that might include a promise of the destruction of the enemy (ARM 26.214 = ARM 10.8 = LAPO 18.1138). The debate can be illustrated through two different translations of this Mari text; in Stern's translation, the goddess Annunitum promised that, "I will seize the men of Sharrakiya and collect them for the annihilation (*karaš*) of Bēlet-ekallim."[353]

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[348] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:20; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 283.

[349] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 20 (*CTH* 41; 131); however, much of this section has been reconstructed.

[350] Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 80–81 (Šulgi D, 215–217)

[351] RIME 2:43–45, E2.1.2.2, 29–35.

[352] For a discussion of this translation, see Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," 73–74; Altman, *Tracing the Earliest Recorded Concepts*, 33.

[353] Philip D. Stern, *The Biblical* Herem*: A Window on Israel's Religious Experience*, BJS 211 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991), 67; for a similar translation, see also Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 260.

However, Nissinen translates it as “I will gather them into the camp of Belet-ekallim.”[354]

Several other examples of extermination of enemies appear in the Mari correspondence.[355] One letter recounts that a thousand Nurrugean troops were killed after the defeat of Nineveh.[356] However, the majority of the people remained alive. In another situation, Shamshi-Adad captured several princes of Yaʾilanum to ensure peace. However, when he changed plans and began an assault on them, he ordered his son Yasmah-Adad to kill the princes. The letter also includes instructions about what to do with portions of the possessions of these princes.

> On the subject of the “sons” of Yaʾilanum who are with you, I told you to keep them at hand for the improbable eventuality that there might later be peace. At present, there will be no peace with Yaʾilanum. I expressly demand that they are seized. Send instructions that the “sons” of Yaʾilanum, all those who are with you, individually, die this very night. That there be no more guard without respite nor expenditure of food! That graves be made for them. That they die and be bu[ried] in the grave.[357]

Ishme-Dagan killed many prisoners when he captured the Yaʾilanum tribe. According to a letter from Shamshi-Adad (his father), the fate of the civilians is ambiguous: “Mār-Addu, the Yaʾilanumite, his princes and his whole army are dead. Not one man of them escaped.”[358] However, when Isgme-Dagan himself wrote about it, he described it differently: “Mār-Addu and all the sons (of the tribe) of Yaʾilanum were killed, and all its servants and soldiers were killed, and not one enemy escaped. Rejoice!”[359] The tribe is never referred to again in cuneiform sources; Vidal suggests that the tribe was exterminated due to the dehumanization of nomads by city-dwellers.

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[354] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 48.

[355] Michaël Guichard, “Les Aspects Religieux de la Guerre a Mari,” *RA* 93 (1999): 43–45.

[356] M.8898 (unpublished); see Jordi Vidal, “‘Kill Them All!’ Some Remarks on the Annihilation of the Yaʾilanum Tribe (1781 B.C.E.),” *JAOS* 133 (2013): 648; Ziegler, “The Conquest of the Holy City of Nineveh,” 23.

[357] Ziegler, “The Conquest of the Holy City of Nineveh,” 24 (ARM 1.8 = LAPO 17.679 = Sasson 6.7.b.ii.1).

[358] Vidal, “Kill Them All!,” 684–85 (A.3304 [unpublished]).

[359] Ibid., 685 (ARM 4.33 = LAPO 17.527 = Sasson 3.6.a.i.1).

Another time, Shamshi-Adad wrote to his younger son Yasmah-Adad that his older son Ishme-Dagan had won a great victory. "Išme-Dagan defeated the army of the entire land as well as the Turukku-tribesmen. Not one man escaped. He captured the entire land of Aḫazum. This was a crushing defeat for the land. Be happy!" The king then went on to berate Yasmah-Adad for being lazy and not achieving a similar victory.[360] Ishme-Dagan wrote a letter to his brother describing the deceitful action of the Turukku-tribesmen, who attacked the village of Talzuru in spite of having a peace treaty with them. They killed every male in the village, taking as plunder their families and belongings (ARM 4.24 = LAPO 17.506 = Sasson 3.2.c.ix).

Elsewhere in early Mesopotamia, a letter from Shu-Sin to the general Sharrum-bani I recorded that the king gave permission to execute and blind people, though he notes that this was not normally part of his general's authority. However, the king also rebuked the general for harming the women of a city after it was captured, since he had commanded that those women were not to be harmed.[361]

5.5.4. Assyrian

The Assyrians are famous for their harsh activity after battle, especially against those who rebelled against the Assyrian king. Quite often the wrath of the Assyrians fell only on those directly responsible for the rebellion and had less of an impact on the common people.[362] Adad-nirari II killed the brothers of a king that had rebelled.[363] Sennacherib directed his wrath at Ekron against those who were guilty: the leaders of the city were killed and their bodies hung on the towers of the city, the civilians who had supported those leaders were led into exile, and the other civilians were let free.[364] Likewise, in the Rassam Cylinder Assurbanipal records that Assyrian officials put down a rebellion in Egypt by directing their wrath at the ones plotting the rebellion: "I sought, and what I did to them (was) good; but people of the city of Sais, the city of Bindid, the city of Ṣiʾnu and the rest of the cities, how many with them placed, plotted evil small and large, by weapons they felled, a single person did not escape from within; their corpses they hung on stakes, their skin they flayed, and clothed (with it) the walls of the city."[365]

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[360] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 212 (ARM 1.69+ = LAPO 17.452 = Sasson 3.6.a.i.2).

[361] Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur*, 410.

[362] For more examples, see Karlsson, *Relations of Power*, 163–64.

[363] RIMA 2:144, A.0.99.1, 13; see also H. W. F. Saggs, "Assyrian Prisoners of War and the Right to Live," in *Vorträge gehalten auf der 28. Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale in Wien: 6.–10. Juli 1981*, AfOB 19 (Horn: Berger, 1982), 89.

However, the killing of large numbers of people (including civilians) sometimes appears in the Assyrian records (though this is usually in the context of cities that had resisted the Assyrian king). Tukulti-Ninurta I defeated the cult center of Purulimzu and "burnt them (the inhabitants) alive (and) the remnants of [their] army I took as captives," though this could have just referred to those who died when the city burned down.[366] An example from Assurnasirpal II demonstrates the viciousness of an Assyrian king on a city that rebelled. This particular account concerns Tela, a city of the land of Nirbu that had rebelled against Assurnasirpal II.[367] (In another inscription he referred to killing adolescent boys "as an offering," giving religious motivations for the killing.[368])

> I felled 3000 of their fighting men with the sword. I carried off prisoners, possessions, oxen, (and) cattle from them. I burnt many captives from them. I captured many troops alive: from some I cut off their arms (and) hands; from others I cut off their noses, ears, (and) extremities. I gouged out the eyes of many troops. I made one pile of the living (and) one of heads. I hung their heads on trees around the city. I burnt their adolescent boys (and) girls.[369]

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[364] RINAP 3.1:65, 4, 46–47.

[365] *COS* 4.41:185; also *ARAB* 2:294, §773; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 214.

[366] RIMA 1:236, A.0.78.1, iv.44–v.1; for the latter view, see Saggs, "Assyrian Prisoners of War," 88.

[367] Saggs, "Assyrian Prisoners of War," 89–91.

[368] RIMA 2:260, A.0.101.19, 76–77; see Karlsson, *Relations of Power*, 119–20.

[369] RIMA 2:201, A.0.101.1, 115–117; the adolescent boys (*batūlu*) and girls (*batultu*) are those adolescents who have not yet been married, as illustrated in *CAD* 2:173–74, s.v. batūlu, batultu.

Assur-dan attacked the Iausu and "those that survived I slaughtered (*qatû*, D)."[370] Shalmaneser III said that, "I put to the sword (the inhabitants of) cities insubmissive to Aššur."[371] In the Balawat bands, Shalmaneser III's soldiers are depicted killing the men of Hazazu, perhaps after the battle, as well as the men of Urartu (fig. 5.27).[372]

An unknown Assyrian official reported to Tiglath-pileser III that a major Assyrian force had been defeated by the Urartians, and "Not one of them got away."[373] A fragmentary text of Tiglath-pileser III records either the execution of children or their mutilation.[374] One of the paintings from Til Barsip (perhaps from the time of Tiglath-pileser III) is damaged but appears to depict a beheading in front of the king while a mourning woman stands nearby; another painting includes a pile of heads.[375] As part of his first campaign, Sennacherib killed everyone in Hirimmu. "I put to the sword the population of Ḫirimmu, a dangerous enemy, and I did not spare a single one."[376] Another version says that, "I put to the sword the inhabitants of Ḫirimmu, not sparing (any of) their offspring."[377] When Sennacherib conquered Babylon, he said "Its people, young and old, I did not spare, and I filled the city squares with their corpses."[378] A relief from Sennacherib shows a line of prisoners; a soldier holds the beard of one prisoner and raises his hand with a short sword to kill him.[379]

A relief from Assurbanipal depicts an Assyrian soldier holding an Elamite officer by the hair and raising a knife in his other hand to kill him. The accompanying inscription reads, "Ituni, the general of Te-umman, (the) king of Elam, whom he had sent to my presence impudently saw the

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[370] RIMA 2:133, A.0.98.1, 12; see also Saggs, "Assyrian Prisoners of War," 88–89.

[371] RIMA 3:46, A.0.102.8, 23′a.

[372] *ANEP*, 125, no. 360–61 (band 3); King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pls. 17–18.

[373] Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 120 (SAA 19.71 = ND 2463).

[374] RINAP 1:57, 20, 2–3.

[375] Dolce, "'Head of the Enemy' in the Sculptures," 125–29; for another picture, see F. Thureau-Dangin and M. Dunand, *Til-Barsib*, 2 vols. (Paris: Geuthner, 1936), pls. 51–52.

[376] RINAP 3.1:173, 22, 57–59; the story is repeated in multiple inscriptions of Sennacherib.

[377] RINAP 3.2:68, 44, 14–15.

[378] RINAP 3.2:316, 223, 45–46.

[379] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 174–75, no. 243 (Or.Dr.I.34 = BM 124786).

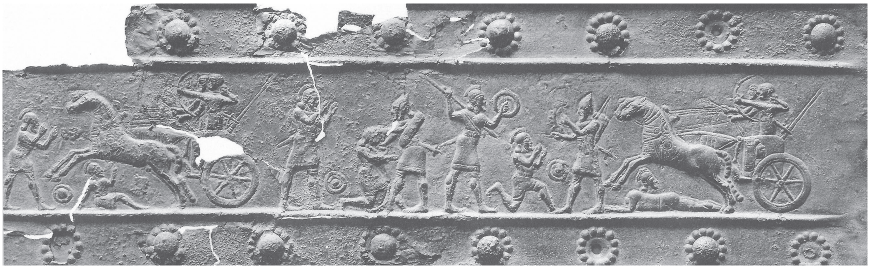

Fig. 5.27. Extermination of enemies by Assyrians. Band 7 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 42.

mighty battle and with his iron dagger cut with his own hands (his) bow, the ornament of his hands."[380] In another relief it appears that the soldiers of Assurbanipal killed Arab women in their tents (fig. 5.22).[381] A letter from Bel-ibni during the reign of Assurbanipal reported on the massacre of a group of prisoners for pragmatic reasons (*ABL* 520 = *SLA* 43). A group of 150 soldiers were attacked by 400 enemies, so the Assyrians killed their 130 prisoners to prevent them helping the enemy.

5.5.5. Later Empires

The Kassite king Kurigalzu II recorded that a rebel from the mountains attacked Nippur and "spilled like water the blood of Nippur's citizens," which led to Kurigalzu II avenging the citizens.[382] In this case, the killing of citizens by an enemy was something to be avenged, not glorified. Ninurta-kudurri-usur, a governor of the land of Suhu, defeated an Aramean tribe and annihilated (*áš-kun ka-mar-šú-nu*) many of the enemy troops without any loss to his own troops. However, due to problems getting water for his troops 254 men escaped, and he set free 80 men (after disfiguring them) to tell other people about his victory. The claim of annihilation is self-evidently not complete in this case.[383]

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[380] Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, 42, pl. 24 (BM 124941).

[381] Dubovský, "Ripping Open Pregnant Arab Women;" the relief is in Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 33 (BM 124927); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:451.

[382] George, "Other Second-Millennium Royal and Commemorative Inscriptions," 118, no. 61.

[383] RIMB 2:296–97, S.0.1002.2, ii.1–22.

The Babylonian Chronicles record that Nabopolassar "lef[t] no one (alive)" when he conquered the Assyrian city Ruggulitu.[384] When Nebuchadnezzar II was still a prince, he defeated a coalition of enemies at Carchemish. According to the Babylonian Chronicles, it was a total victory. "They fought, and the army of Miṣir beat a retreat before him; he [de]feated and destroyed it until it was completely annihilated. The Akkadian troops overtook the survivors of the army of Mi[ṣir who] had escaped the defeat and whom the weapons had not reached and [deci]mated them in the district of Ḫamath. Not one man [returned] to his country."[385] As part of his attack on those oppressing Lebanon, in the Wadi Brisa Inscription he recorded that he "wiped out its enemy everywhere."[386] According to the Old Testament, the Babylonians killed the sons of Zedekiah after Jerusalem was conquered (2 Kgs 25:7).

In the Bisitun Inscription Darius recorded a few instances of extensive killing of the enemy. Against Zazana he defeated the army and "the remainder were thrown into the water." However, the enemy king Nadintabaira fled along with some of his horsemen to Babylon, forcing Darius to conquer the city.[387] In the battle against the Elamite Athamaita, Darius's army (led by Gaubaruva) "defeated the Elamites and decimated them." After the battle Athamaita was captured and taken to Darius, who killed him.[388]

5.5.6. West Semitic

An ivory relief from Ugarit depicts the king of Ugarit holding an enemy by the hair (in the style of the Egyptian pharaohs) and a short sword in his other hand with the point against the enemy's eye.[389] A similar style of relief was found at Hamath (dating to about 900), in which one man holds another by the hair with his left hand and holds a short sword against his neck. Unfortunately, the characters in the relief are unidentified (the inscription is illegible).[390] The Amarna letters refer to several massacres of people in a city. Mayarzana complained to Egypt about a group of Habiru that burned down towns and "hardly a family escaped" from each town, implying that many civilians had died in the attack. These Habiru then fled to hide with Amanhatpe, an enemy of Egypt (EA 185–186). It appears that the roving band of Habiru was not capable of deporting or controlling these conquered towns, so they destroyed them instead.[391] The town of Sumur also suffered greatly. Although it is not clear who massacred them (different letters provide various actors), it appears that twenty-five people were killed and only four remained alive when help arrived. Since the letter states that no man was there, most likely the twenty-five people were civilian.

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[384] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 223.

[385] Ibid., 227–29.

[386] Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 270.

[387] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 144 (DB §19–20).

[388] Ibid., 149 (DB §71).

[389] *ANEP*, 351, no. 817 (Damascus).

[390] For more details and a picture of the relief (in the National Museum in Copenhagen), see Hawkins, *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, 2:420–21; 3:pl. 231.

> [Sum]ur [was afraid of] the troo[p]s of Šehl[al]. There were no m[en i]n it to protect it. I [has]tened to the rescue from Ir[qata], and I [sei]zed S[u]mur and I have saved? Your [Palace] from the hand of the troops of Š[eh]lal. If I had not been staying in [Irqata], if I had been staying in a peaceful place, the troops of Šehlal [would certainly have s]et on fire Sumur and its palace. When I hastened to the rescue from Irqata, and arrived in Sumur, there were no men that had stayed on in the palace. The (only) men that had stayed on in the palace were: Šabi-Ilu, Bišitanu, Maya (and) Arzawa. These were the 4 men that had stayed on in the palace, and they said to me: "Save us from the hand of the troops of Šehlal", and I save[d t]hem from the hand of the troops of Šehlal. [4 per]sons were alive.[The troops of Šeh]lal killed 25 (men).[392]

Mesha recorded that he killed Israelite prisoners. Mesha boasts that he "slew [הרג] all the people" of Gad.[393] Later at Nebo he "slew [הרג] all of them, seven thousand men and boys and women and girls and maidens because I had dedicated [חרם, *hiphil*] it to ʿAštār-Kemôš."[394] The use of חרם in this Moabite text has engendered a tremendous amount of discussion, but most agree that placing someone under חרם involves devoting them to the deity by killing them.[395] Some have argued that the term appears in Ugaritic literature, but the link is unlikely.[396] Another use of חרם appears in a south Arabian text (perhaps dating to about 700 BCE, though it is difficult to determine) by Karib-ilu.[397] Lauren Monroe lists four ways that this text parallels the Old Testament and Moabite usage of the word: it includes extensive destruction, many people are killed, a city is opened up for settlement, and a cultic installation is erected.[398]

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[391] On the event, see Jordi Vidal, "Violence against Non-Combatant Population in the Levant in the Late Bronze Age," in Nadali, *The Other Face of the Battle*, 67–70.

[392] Ibid., 66 (EA 62).

[393] Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 394 (Mesha Inscription l. 11).

[394] Ibid (Mesha Inscription ll. 16–17).

[395] For an entrance into the secondary literature, see Stern, *Biblical* Herem; K. Lawson Younger Jr., "Some Recent Discussion on the *ḥērem*," in *Far from Minimal:*

> And he devoted the city of NŠN to the *ḥērem* by burning, and he instructed him to destroy his palace ʿFRW and his city NŠN and imposed on NŠN a tribute for the priests, and he gave command concerning those of NŠN whose dedication to the gods was allotted(?) so that they were killed, and he instructed SMHYFC and NŠN that Sabaeans should settle in the city NŠN and that SMHYFC and NŠN should build a temple for ʿLMQH in the midst of the city NŠN.[399]

Although the book of Kings does not record many killings of enemies after the battle, the Old Testament idea of *ḥerem* is well known through the story of Joshua, in which it appears that YHWH commanded Israel to kill every last Canaanite (Deut 7; Josh 6). The research on *ḥerem* is extensive.[400] Its meaning depends on such factors as the date of writing and social contexts of the texts, the specific meaning of the word *ḥerem* (espe-

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Celebrating the Work and Influence of Philip R. Davies, ed. Duncan Burns and J. W. Rogerson (New York: T&T Clark, 2012), 505–22; for the argument disassociating the use of חרם by Mesha from the Old Testament use of the word, see Arie Versluis, “Devotion and/or Destruction? The Meaning and Function of חרם in the Old Testament,” *ZAW* 128 (2016): 233–46.

[396] For a recent discussion, see Michael Stahl, “*Ḥērem*-Warfare at Ugarit? Reevaluating *KTU* 1.13 and *KTU* 1.3 II,” *UF* 47 (2016): 265–300.

[397] For the historical background of the text, see Lauren A. S. Monroe, “Israelite, Moabite and Sabaean War-*herem* Traditions and the Forging of National Identity: Reconsidering the Sabaean Text RES 3945 in Light of Biblical and Moabite Evidence,” *VT* 57 (2007): 326–35.

[398] Monroe, “Israelite, Moabite and Sabaean War-*Herem* Traditions,” 335.

[399] Monroe, *Josiah’s Reform and the Dynamics of Defilement*, 52 (*RES* 3945).

[400] In addition to the works listed above, for an introduction see the works listed in Trimm, “Recent Research on Warfare,” 9–10; more recently, see also R. Achenbach, “Divine Warfare and Yhwh’s Wars: Religious Ideologies of War in the Ancient Near East and in the Old Testament,” in *The Ancient Near East in the Twelfth–Tenth Centuries BCE: Culture and History: Proceedings of the International Conference Held at the University of Haifa, 2–5 May, 2010*, ed. G. Galil et al., AOAT 392 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2012), 1–26; Katell Berthelot, Joseph E. David, and Marc Hirshman, eds., *The*

cially difficult since it appears to be used in different ways throughout the Old Testament), and the historicity of the accounts. The understanding of *ḥerem* as complete extermination is complicated by such factors as the saving of Rahab (Josh 2), the presence of survivors in the same verse as statements of completed destruction (Josh 10:20), and the frequent references to banishing Canaanites (Josh 24:12, 18; Judg 1:20; 6:9). Based on its appearance in biblical texts, Moab, and Arabia, Monroe has argued that the motif is connected with early state formation.[401] Lemos proposes that the motif derives primarily (but not solely) from material scarcities and conflict over territory.[402]

5.6. Political and Religious Results of Conquest

> After his cities and towns have already been shattered, enter each of the palaces, take control of their bureaucrats, and collect their implements [of administration]…. Accept those who seek to surrender and settle them.
>
> —Wu-Tzu 5

Along with the physical consequences for the defeated cites and the possible extermination of the population, the victorious armies (especially those of the empires) often implemented political and religious changes. "An imperial set-up thus requires the systematization of unbalance, and in this respect it is the apex of all forms of exploitation."[403] The political results can be broadly divided into four broad stages. First, some attacks were simply raids that engendered no lasting political results. Second, successful attacks could lead to forcing the present rulers to become friendly vassals. Third, recalcitrant rulers could be removed and more amenable rulers (sometimes referred to as "puppet kings") installed in their place. Fourth, the foreign rulers could be removed altogether and the land incorporated into the empire directly as a province under the control of a high official, such as a governor. This section will overview several examples of these political results from each cultural area.

Gift of the Land and the Fate of the Canaanites in Jewish Thought (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); Lemos, "Dispossessing Nations."

[401] Monroe, "Israelite, Moabite and Sabaean War-*Herem* Traditions."

[402] Lemos, "Dispossessing Nations."

[403] Liverani, "Ideology of the Assyrian Empire," 297.

Along with political results, conquest sometimes resulted in religious consequences for the defeated. The plundering of divine images ("godnapping") is attested throughout the ancient Near East, but the destruction of temples is much rarer. The question of religious coercion by the empires is more controversial; it appears that the religious influence moved in both directions. However, surprisingly, kings rarely describe their victories over their enemies as the victory of their deity over the deity of the enemy.

5.6.1. Egyptian

The Egyptian empire ruled many lands in its times of strength, especially Nubia to the south and Canaan to the northeast.[404] However, the exact form that Egyptian control took over these lands varied greatly throughout Egyptian history and it is difficult to make general statements. Whenever possible, a detailed study of the reign of a specific pharaoh or dynasty is preferable.[405] The earliest Egyptian armies in Canaan were mainly interested in raiding and trading, but beginning with the New Kingdom, Egypt gradually strengthened its hold on Canaan. Thutmose I traveled as far as the Euphrates, but it was Thutmose III who established a strong foothold in Canaan through instituting Egyptian centers in various cities and employing harbors that supplied his troops on their many campaigns in the area.[406] Succeeding pharaohs left many monuments in these lands to demonstrate their control.[407] The borders of Egypt in Canaan were greatest during the New Kingdom, reaching as far as Syria.[408] Although Egypt controlled Canaan, they did not install a viceroy over it as a unified province. "The Egyptian Empire can thus be considered to have been a loosely held zone of warring city-states that was kept under control through a rather thin series of garrisons and not too many troops."[409] The Egyptians eventually lost control of the land of Canaan, especially with the arrival of the Sea People. A similar phenomenon might have happened in Libya at the same time as the Libyans encroached on Egyptian territory.[410]

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[404] For an overview, see Kemp, "Imperialism and Empire in New Kingdom Egypt"; Stuart Tyson Smith, "Imperialism," *OEAE* 2:153–58.

[405] For an example of this, see the relevant essays in David O'Connor and Eric H. Cline, eds., *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998).

[406] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 46–63, 116; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 125–213.

[407] For a list and map of the monuments left by Seti I, Ramesses II, and Ramesses III in the Levant, see Alan R. Millard, "Ramesses Was Here … And Others, Too!," in *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K. A. Kitchen*, ed. Mark Collier and Steven Snape (Bolton: Rutherford, 2011), 304–6.

[408] See map in Baines and Malek, *Cultural Atlas of Ancient Egypt*, 44.

Egypt also often controlled Nubia, to the south of Egypt.[411] Usually this control was restricted to Lower Nubia (between the first and second cataract of the Nile, in southern Egypt and northern Sudan today), but in the New Kingdom Upper Nubia (between the second and sixth cataract, in Sudan today) was also conquered. Nubia was incorporated much more extensively into Egypt than the areas in the Levant since an Egyptian viceroy often ruled over Nubia and reported directly to the pharaoh.[412] Egypt was able to control Nubia longer than Canaan, withdrawing from Nubia around 1070.[413] Ironically, in the Third Intermediate period the Nubian king Piye conquered Egypt and established his own dynasty there (the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty).

Egyptian religion appeared to be open to influence from other areas; a prominent example of this is the rise of the Asiatic god Seth in Egyptian religion, perhaps due to the rise in power of Asiatics in Egypt. Egyptian religion also influenced the areas surrounding them. Nubian religion revolved around the deities Osiris, Isis, Aman, and Apedemak; three of these were from Egypt.[414] It is unclear how the Egyptians treated the religious objects of those they conquered. Later in Egyptian history, Piye recorded that he protected the temples of Memphis when he captured the city and performed all the various rituals to ensure the gods would be happy.[415]

5.6.2. Hittite

The Hittite kings conquered many of the surrounding nations and usually forced their rulers to become vassals of the Hittites, with their obligations formalized by treaties.[416] If a city did not resist the Hittite king, they would not be burned or destroyed, but they were required to provide troops for the Hittites. Several groups pleaded with a Hittite king when he came to fight them: "Our Master! Do not destroy us! And take us and accept us as your subjects! And make us into soldiers (and) charioteers! And we will regularly go out to battle with you!"[417] The Kaska town Timuhala surrendered to Suppiluliuma to prevent their city from being destroyed.[418] Manapa-Tarhunta signaled his surrender to Mursili II by sending his mother and other elderly people to the Hittite king; Mursili II did not enter his land but made him a vassal.[419]

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[409] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 145.

[410] Ibid., 259.

[411] For more on the relationship between Nubia and Egypt, see David O'Connor, *Ancient Nubia: Egypt's Rival in Africa* (Philadelphia: University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania, 1993).

[412] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 76; O'Connor, *Ancient Nubia*, 59.

[413] O'Connor, *Ancient Nubia*, 58.

[414] Ibid., 79–81.

[415] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 486.

Sometimes garrisons were put into these foreign places, but usually the Hittites did not maintain Hittite troops in foreign countries and did not incorporate foreign territory into Hittite country.[420] Interestingly, few of these treaties include the requirement of paying a tribute, though one exception was Tudhaliya IV allowing Ugarit not to send soldiers to join the Hittite battles against Assyria, but to send significant amounts of gold to enrich the Hittite empire.[421] It appears that successive Hittite kings had to renew treaties. Suppiluliuma I signed a treaty with Azzi(-Hayasa), but he refused to return Hittite subjects to Hatti when Mursili II, the next Hittite king, came to power. In his first year, Mursili II requested to no avail that the captives be returned (he did not accuse them of breaking a treaty). In his second year, he threatened an invasion, but did not act. In his third year internal disruptions to the east encouraged Azzi to attack Hittite land, leading to a Hittite general expelling them from Hittite land (but still not attacking their land). Finally, in his fourth year Mursili II invaded Azzi and forced them to submit.[422]

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[416] For these treaties, see *TLC* and Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*.

[417] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Our Master! Do Not Destroy Us!," 55 (*KBo* 4.4 rev. III 48–50; *CTH* 6.II.5.B).

[418] *COS* 1.74:191 (*CTH* 40).

[419] *COS* 2.16:86 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[420] Bryce, "Hittite State and Society," 95–96.

[421] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 182–83 (*CTH* 108); other exceptions are in ibid., 59 (*CTH* 62), 127 (*CTH* 110), and 166–67 (*CTH* 47); see Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 84–85.

[422] For details on this story, see Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 92–93.

A few places became viceregal kingdoms; the most prominent examples included Aleppo and Carchemish.[423] A few other kingdoms achieved *kuirwana* status (protectorate), in which they theoretically were ranked higher than a vassal king and had more independence; Kizzuwatna and Mitanni were examples of this status.[424] The Hittites had the greatest problems with Kaska, their neighbors to the north. Since the Kaska were a loosely organized people group without a king, Hittite attempts to pacify them were usually only temporarily successful.

Earlier in Hittite history, they practiced a moderate level of godnapping.[425] Anitta reported two cases of godnapping. The cult statue of his deity had been taken from Nesa by Uhna, the king of Zalpuwa. Later, when the goddess Halmassuit gave his enemy (her people) into his hands, he built a temple for her.[426] Hattusili I took deities from Zalpa after he conquered it and gave them to the Sun Goddess of Arinna and the goddess Mezzulla.[427] When the Hittites sacked Babylon, they took the divine image of Marduk from Babylon. However, an inscription that purports to be from a Babylonian king named Agum-Kakrime (though the text might be pseudonymous) reports that he rescued the image of Marduk from the Hittites and brought it back to Babylon.[428] The Hittites seem to have employed godnapping as a means to punish defeated enemies rather than a desire for ransom.[429] However, since reports of godnapping disappear from later Hittite texts (care for captured deities is emphasized instead), it appears that the Hittites changed their policy on the treatment of captured deities, or at least they became reticent about reporting such activities.[430] At no point in Hittite history did they destroy divine images.[431]

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[423] Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 179–80.

[424] Bryce, “Hittite State and Society,” 96.

[425] Itamar Singer, “The Thousand Gods of Ḫatti: The Limits of an Expanding Pantheon,” in *Concept of the Other in Near Eastern Religions*, ed. Ilai Alon, Ithamar Gruenwald, and Itamar Singer, IOS 14 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 85–90; Daniel Schwemer, “Fremde Götter in Ḫatti: Die hethitische Religion im Spannungsfeld von Synkretismus und Abgrenzung,” in *Ḫattuša-Boğazköy: Das Hethiterreich im Spannungsfeld des Alten Orients; 6. Internationales Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, 22.–24. März 2006 in Würzburg*, ed. Gernot Wilhelm, CDOG 6 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2008), 137–57; Amir Gilan, “The End of God-Napping and the Religious Foundations of the New Hittite Empire,” *ZA* 104 (2014): 195–205.

[426] *COS* 1.72:183 (*CTH* 1.A).

[427] *ANEHST*, 219–20 (*CTH* 4.II.A); he continues godnapping various other deities at later times.

[428] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 361–63; Mursili II later refers to this godnapping in a plague prayer to the Sun Goddess of Arinna; see Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 53 (*CTH* 376.A).

[429] For one possible exception, see EA 55.

The Hittites did not seem to force their religion on conquered nations.[432] Overall, the Hittites were happy to add the gods of the conquered people to their own pantheon and did not view defeat of an enemy god as a defeat of the enemy god, but rather as divine abandonment.[433] Suppiluliuma I protected a temple in Carchemish when he conquered it.[434] Mursili II safeguarded a temple in Hurna: "But because there was a temple of the Storm God of Hurna behind the city of Hurna, I spared it and they did not plunder it. The servants of the god who were behind, I left alone, and they are still there."[435] However, one possible exception is found in a Hittite ritual performed before battle in which the Kaska gods were called to the divine council and accused of beginning a war unjustly with the Hittites. "By ye, the gods of the Kashkean country, began war. Ye drove the gods of the Hatti land out of their realm and took over their realm for yourselves."[436]

5.6.3. Early Mesopotamian

Early Mesopotamia was home to several large empires, but for the sake of space only two will be examined here. One of the earliest and most famous empires was that of Sargon the Great, who conquered many places (including Uruk, Ur, Eninmar, and Umma) and recorded that two others served him: "Mari and Elam stood (in obedience) before Sargon, lord of the land."[437] When Elam rebelled against his son Rimush, he defeated them in battle and said that he "ruled Elam."[438] Naram-Sin continued the expansion of the empire with the acquisition of Armanum and Ebla: "Narām-Sîn, the mighty, conquered Armānum and Ebla. Further, from the *side* of the Euphrates River as far as (the city of) Ulišum, he smote the people whom the god Dagān had given to him for the first time, so that they perform service for the god Ilaba, his god."[439] In several conquered areas the inhabitants even built a temple to Naram-Sin as a deity.[440]

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[430] For the theory that the policy changed, see Gilan, "End of God-Napping"; for the view that they no longer mention it, see Petra M. Goedegebuure, "Hittite Iconoclasm: Disconnecting the Icon, Disempowering the Referent," in *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction in the Ancient Near East and Beyond*, ed. Natalie Naomi May, OIS 8 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2012), 412.

[431] Goedegebuure, "Hittite Iconoclasm," 413.

[432] Alfonso Archi, "Aštata: A Case of Hittite Imperial Religious Policy," *JANER* 14 (2014): 141–63.

[433] Singer, "Thousand Gods of Ḫatti," 86–87.

[434] *COS* 1.74:190 (*CTH* 40).

[435] Beal, "Making, Preserving, and Breaking the Peace," 94.

[436] *ANET*, 354–55 (*CTH* 422.A).

[437] RIME 2:15, E2.1.1.2, 92–99; for more on the empire of Sargon the Great, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 44–55; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 133–54.

Hammurabi led a later empire based in Babylon.[441] When he rose to power, Babylon controlled a few adjacent cities (including Dilbat, Sippar, Kish, and Borsippa) and was a weaker ally of Shamshi-Adad of Assyria and Rim-Sin of Larsa. However, he eventually conquered Larsa and assumed control of much of its land (such as Isin, Uruk, Ur, and Nippur), portraying himself as the legitimate successor of Rim-Sin and proclaiming a cancellation of all outstanding personal debt. He turned Larsa into a Babylonian province (named Yamutbal) and appointed the Babylonian Sin-iddinam to rule it.[442] After his defeat of Elam, Hammurabi had the opportunity to appoint a king in Eshnunna or become the king himself. He allowed the army to appoint a new king (they chose the commoner Silli-Sin), who promptly declared his independence from Hammurabi. However, they eventually acted as allies until Mari became subservient to Eshnunna, leading Hammurabi to attack both of them. It is unclear what role Hammurabi took in Eshnunna or Mari after their conquest.[443] Mieroop argues that Hammurabi's rule in Babylonia led to a change in the political structure of the area. "Babylonia never became a region of city-states again, but metamorphosed into a large territorial state with a single capital city whose rulers had varying degrees of control over the countryside. No competing city-states were ever to rise again."[444]

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[438] RIME 2:56, E2.1.2.7, 30–36.

[439] RIME 2:133, E2.1.4.26, ii.2–23.

[440] RIME 2:113–14, E2.1.4.10, 20–57.

[441] For more on Hammurabi, see Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 108–16; Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*; Charpin, *Hammurabi of Babylon*; Liverani, *Ancient Near East*, 240–55.

[442] For more details on this conquest, see Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 31–39, 84–85.

[443] For more details on these conquests, see ibid., 40–78.

[444] Ibid., 39.

Godnapping is recorded occasionally in early Mesopotamia.[445] Dadusha boasted that he had the gods of Qabara taken to Eshnunna.[446] One Mari letter (ARM 5.72 = LAPO 17.462) records the case of the soldier Yawi-Adad accused by his officer Qarradum of plundering from a temple that had been declared off limits; his defense was that his officer (who was attempting to execute him for the offense) had done the same as him: "Qarrâdum ne s'(en) est-il pas (aussi) approprie?"[447] In a few select cases, divine images were destroyed after a battle. Lugal-zagesi of Umma "plundered the temple of Amagestinana, dismantled her precious metals and lapis-lazuli and threw her in a well."[448] However, this was recorded by his enemy URU-KA-gina as part of a list of evil things Lugal-zagesi had done.

According to Hanspeter Schaudig, the Esagil Chronicle refers to Marduk's destruction of the divine images of other gods.[449] "At his command, the hostile gods are bound, and dressed in soiled garments, they are cut to pieces like (mere) *mēsu*-trees."[450]

5.6.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian Empire and how they treated the surrounding nations has been extensively studied, especially in the western arena with its connections to the Old Testament.[451] Parker, in a study of Assyria's northern boundary, developed a spectrum of various ways that nations interacted with the Assyrians.[452] At one end of the spectrum were areas characterized by "negative imperial control," such as enemy nations, actively opposing Assyria or autonomous states that were not fighting Assyria but preserved their neutrality on their own terms. In the middle of the spectrum were buffer states or zones, where they did not serve the Assyrian king directly, but their neutrality was enforced by the Assyrian king (Parker sees Ukku and Shubria as fulfilling this role).[453] Assyria did not try to interfere in these countries (though they did desire to know what was happening in them), but preserved them as a buffer against the much more powerful state of Urartu to the north.[454] As long as Urartu remained powerful, Shubria was able to play both sides against each other and preserve its own integrity. It could even act in ways that would bring down Assyria's wrath

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[445] Steven W. Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King! Religion in the Exercise of Power in the Neo-Assyrian Empire*, CHANE 10 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 146; Christopher Woods, "Mutilation of Image and Text in Early Sumerian Sources," in May, *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction*, 33–56.

[446] *ANEHST*, 99.

[447] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 37; on this text, see Victor H. Matthews, "Legal Aspects of Military Service in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Military Law Review* 94 (1981): 145–46.

[448] Woods, "Mutilation of Image and Text in Early Sumerian Sources," 36 (RIME 1:278, E1.9.9.5. vii.1–6); for more on this destruction of the divine image, see Hanspeter Schaudig, "Death of Statues and Rebirth of Gods," in May, *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction*, 128–30.

[449] Although the text refers to events of the third millennium, it most likely dates to some point after 1100.

[450] Schaudig, "Death of Statues and Rebirth of Gods," 131; however, other translations differ, leaving the last part of the sentence untranslated, such as Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 265: "On his order, the hostile gods are captured, dressed in dirty garments, […]."

[451] J. N. Postgate, "The Land of Assur and the Yoke of Assur," *WA* 23 (1992):

247–63; A. Kirk Grayson, "Assyrian Rule of Conquered Territory in Ancient Western Asia," *CANE* 2:959–68; Hayim Tadmor, "World Dominion: The Expanding Horizon of the Assyrian Empire," in *Landscapes: Territories, Frontiers and Horizons in the Ancient Near East, Papers Presented to the XLIV Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Venezia, 7–11 July 1997: Part One: Invited Lectures*, ed. L. Milano et al., HANE/M 3.1 (Padova: Sargon, 1999), 55–62; Simo Parpola, "Assyria's Expansion in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries and Its Long-Term Repercussions in the West," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors Form the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina: Proceedings of the Centennial Symposium W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research and American Schools of Oriental Research Jerusalem, May 29–31, 2000*, ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 99–112; Paul-Alain Beaulieu, "World Hegemony, 900–300 BCE," in Snell, *Companion to the Ancient Near East*, 48–61; Angelika Berlejung, "The Assyrians in the West: Assyrianization, Colonialism, Indifference, or Development Policy?," in *Congress Volume Helsinki 2010*, ed. Martti Nissinen, VTSup 148 (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 21–60; Ariel Bagg, "Palestine under Assyrian Rule: A New Look at the Assyrian Imperial Policy in the West," *JAOS* 133 (2013): 119–44; K. Lawson Younger Jr., "The Assyrian Economic Impact on the Southern Levant in the Light of Recent Study," *IEJ* 65 (2015): 179–204; Yifat Thareani, "The Empire and the 'Upper Sea': Assyrian Control Strategies along the Southern Levanite Coast," *BASOR* 375 (2016): 77–102.

[452] Parker, *Mechanics of Empire*, 254.

[453] For more on these buffer states, see Karen Radner, "Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Muṣaṣir, Kumme, Ukku and Šubria—the Buffer States between Assyria and Urarṭu," in *Biainili-Urartu: The Proceedings of The Symposium Held in Munich 12–14 October 2007*, ed. Stephen Kroll et al., Acta Iranica 51 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 243–64.

[454] Parker, *Mechanics of Empire*, 251.

on other states, such as not returning refugees. However, the decline of Urartu was the beginning of the end of Shubria, and it was conquered by Esarhaddon, most likely because the assassins of his father Sennacherib sought refuge there.[455]

In areas of positive imperial control, vassal states were allowed to retain their own leaders, but often signed treaties with the Assyrian king. A key aspect of these treaties was the provision of tribute to Assyria, called *madattu*.[456] Postgate argues that *madattu* was always given by states that were formally subordinate to the Assyrian, but never by kings who gave free will offerings or by areas that were fully incorporated into the Assyrian empire.[457] If a local ruler was to remain in charge, an Assyrian official (often called a *qēpu*) was often placed in the country to monitor the situation. If the Assyrian vassal was loyal, then great reward could result for the vassal. Bar-Rakib wrote that Tiglath-pileser III gave conquered territories to his father Panamuwa as a reward for fighting on campaigns with the Assyrians.[458]

Assyrian history is replete with anecdotes involving these vassal kings.[459] Adad-nirari I described capturing enemy kings and forcing them to swear loyalty oaths before allowing them to return home; every year thereafter the vassal was to send tribute.[460] If a king was rebellious, sometimes they were deposed and another person put on the throne. During his third campaign, Sennacherib removed the king of Ashkelon and put Sharru-lu-dari, the son of their former king, over them.[461] After unsuccessfully pursuing the Babylonian king Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II), Sennacherib appointed Bel-ibni, who was of Babylonian blood and had been raised in the Assyrian court “like a young puppy,” to rule the area.[462]

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[455] Ibid., 230–46.

[456] For more on this tribute, see Postgate, *Taxation and Conscription in the Assyrian Empire*, 119–30.

[457] Ibid., 120.

[458] *COS* 2.37:160.

[459] Naturally, these vassals did not always get along with each other; for a study of a few of these conflicts see Gershon Galil, “Conflicts Between Assyrian Vassals,” *SAAB* 6 (1992): 55–63.

[460] RIMA 1:136, A.0.76.3, 1, 4–14.

[461] RINAP 3.1:175, 22, ii.60–68.

[462] RINAP 3.1:36, 1, 54.

Finally, the ultimate step of control was territorial control, incorporating a land into the Assyrian empire through making it a province and appointing an Assyrian official to rule it. Sennacherib conquered Elenzash and renamed it Kar-Sennacherib, settling exiles from other lands there and establishing a eunuch over it.[463] At various points throughout Assyrian history governors on the frontiers of Assyrian power became very powerful, even occasionally calling themselves kings. Although some have viewed this as a sign of central weakness, others have suggested that this was an accepted part of the Assyrian provincial system.[464] If the local residents did not listen to their governor, then terrible consequences might result; one example comes from Assurbanipal's Rassam Cylinder. "The people (of the city of) Ušu, who did not approach their provincial governor, and did not pay tribute, their annual gift, I killed. Among the nonsubmissive people I did judgment, their gods, their people, I plundered to the land of Assyria."[465]

The question of religious imperialism by the Assyrians has been a debated issue. Spieckermann argues that the limited evidence shows that religious imperialism was a common phenomenon, while Cogan argues that the Assyrians did not engage in religious imperialism.[466] Holloway summarizes their arguments in the following way: "Where Cogan finds exceptions to his own thesis and discounts them as historical anomalies, Spieckermann argues instead that the 'anomalies' preserve reliable descriptions of Neo-Assyrian religious policy—the routine procedure of promulgating the state cult throughout the empire, irrespective of political status."[467] Some have disagreed with Cogan, appealing to texts that recount the Assyrians setting up divine images in conquered territories, such as Tiglath-pileser III stating, "[I fashioned (a statue bearing) image(s) of the god]s, my [lo]rds, and my royal image [out of gold, erected (it) i]n the palace [of the city Gaza], (and) I reckoned (it) [am]ong the gods of their land."[468] Parpola concludes "this is clear evidence of an emperor cult imposed on vassals and citizens alike in the fashion of the late Roman and Byzantine Empires."[469]

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[463] RINAP 3.1:63, 4, 29–30.

[464] For the view that is was a weakness, see Grayson, "Assyrian Rule of Conquered Territory," 2:967. For the alternative view, see Stephanie Dalley, "Shamshi-Ilu, Language and Power in the Western Assyrian Empire," in Bunnens, *Essays on Syria in the Iron Age*, 79–88; Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 491–93; Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 170–72; Luis Siddall, *The Reign of Adad-Nīrārī III: An Historical and Ideological Analysis of an Assyrian King and His Times*, CM 45 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 129–30.

[465] *COS* 4.41:194; also *ARAB* 2:319, §830; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 249.

[466] H. Spieckermann, *Juda unter Assur in der Sargonidenzeit*, FRLANT 129 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982); Morton (Mordechai) Cogan, *Imperialism and Religion: Assyria, Judah and Israel in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.E.*, SBLMS 19 (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1974); Cogan, "Judah under Assyrian Hegemony: A Reexamination of Imperialism and Religion," *JBL* 112 (1993): 403–14.

However, many scholars have followed Cogan's viewpoint. Oded concludes that, "the Assyrians had no overall ideological programme of merging nations and uniting mankind culturally or spiritually."[470] Likewise, Frame argues that, "I can find no evidence to suggest that the formal worship of Aššur ever existed in Babylonia, even during the century or so around 700 when that land was under Assyrian control."[471] In a study of Assyrian influence in Gaza and Ekron, Angelika Berlejung concludes, "A closer look only at Gaza and Ekron makes clear that there was not systematic and deliberate assyrianization or indoctrination of the West with Assyrian religion. The weapon of Assur was not displayed in the West at all, no Assyrian temples were founded for the indigenous people, and anthropomorphic Assyrian divine statues are not attested at all."[472]

Holloway himself argues for a middle ground. "As this study will argue, either the Assyrian sources do not reveal enough information to reconstruct their foreign religious policy in reliable detail, or their foreign religious policy was sufficiently flexible that we cannot with any certainty extrapolate its behavior where our sources are silent."[473] However, Radner notes that Holloway's study is complicated by flattening out the differences between foreign cities that had become important parts of Assyria (especially Haran and Babylon) and other cities further out on the frontier that had just been incorporated into Assyria.[474]

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[467] Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 63.

[468] RINAP 1:106, 42, 10′–11′.

[469] Parpola, "Assyria's Expansion in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries," 101.

[470] Oded, *Mass Deportations*, 74.

[471] Grant Frame, "The God Aššur in Babylonia," in Parpola, *Assyria 1995*, 56.

[472] Angelika Berlejung, "Shared Fates: Gaza and Ekron as Examples for the Assyrian Religious Policy in the West," in May, *Iconoclasm and Text Destruction*, 167.

[473] Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 58.

[474] Karen Radner, "Review of *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King! Religion in the Exer-*

The Assyrians on occasion constructed religious symbols in conquered territories, such as the weapon (GIŠ-TUKUL) of Assur or a royal image in a foreign temple.[475] Shalmaneser III constructed a royal image in Urartian territory. "I made a colossal royal statue of myself (and) wrote thereon the praises of Aššur, the great lord, [my] lord, and the victorious conquests which I had been achieving in the land Nairi. I erected (it) inside his city, in his temple."[476] Tiglath-pileser III did this in several cities in the east. "I rebuilt the cities inside them (those lands), set up the weapon of (the god) Aššur, my lord, therein, (and) brought the people of (foreign) lands conquered by me therein."[477] Holloway suggests that these symbols were designed as a place to swear loyalty oaths to the Assyrian king.[478]

The Assyrian king also reconstructed cult centers in places outside of Assyria, provided for sacrifices to be done in foreign cults on behalf of the Assyrian king, and allowed for the participation of the Assyrian king (usually by proxy) in rituals in these temples.[479] However, the vast majority of these cases were in Babylon or (less commonly) in Harran. Under the Assyrians the *akītu*-festival was celebrated in many cities throughout the Assyrian empire, though the Assyrian god Assur was often not a part of these festivals, as they instead focused on the local gods of the cities, such as Adad or Sin. Pongratz-Leisten argues that the Assyrians placed *akītu*-houses in significant border garrisons; the focus was no longer on the gods but the Assyrian king who moved symbolically to these places and received the blessing of the local gods.[480]

The Assyrians also plundered the divine images of the defeated nations, a practice that continued throughout Assyrian history.[481] Tuku-

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cise of Power in the Neo-Assyrian Empire by Steven W. Holloway," *JESHO* 46 (2003): 226–30.

[475] For a complete list, see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 151–59.

[476] RIMA 3:21, A.0.101.2, 62–63.

[477] RINAP 1:121, 47, 36–37.

[478] Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 160–77.

[479] For the lists, see ibid., 238–54, 261–68, 270–72.

[480] Beate Pongratz-Leisten, "The Interplay of Military Strategy and Cultic Practice in Assyrian Politics," in Parpola, *Assyria 1995*, 245–52.

[481] Kathryn Frakes Kravitz, "Divine Trophies of War in Assyria and Ancient Israel" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 1999); Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 159–81; Erika Diane Johnson, "Stealing the Enemy's Gods: An Exploration of the Phenomenon of Godnap in Ancient Western Asia" (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2011); Shana Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege: 'Godnapping' and Omission in Neo-Assyr-

lti-Ninurta I captured the divine image of Marduk from Babylon.[482] Earlier Assyrian kings, such as Tiglath-pileser I, plundered divine images and presented them to the Assyrian gods. "At that time I donated 25 gods of those lands, my own booty which I had taken, to be door-keepers of the temple of the goddess Ninlil, beloved chief spouse of the god Aššur, my lord, (the temple of) the gods Anu (and) Adad, (the temple of) the Assyrian Ištar, the temples of my city, Aššur, and the goddesses of my land."[483] A relief from Tiglath-pileser III shows his soldiers carefully carrying away captured divine images; one of the captured divine images is a divine warrior carrying an axe (fig. 5.28).[484] A relief of Sennacherib might indicate this practice as well, with short figures being carried on poles by four soldiers away from a conquered city (fig. 5.29).[485] Another relief of Sennacherib shows soldiers carrying away small statues that might also be divine images.[486]

In some ways, this godnapping could be considered parallel to holding the king's family hostage to give the Assyrian's leverage over other countries.[487] Sennacherib returned to Assyria gods that had been godnapped earlier. "The god Adad (and) the goddess Šala, gods of the city Ekallātum whom Marduk-nādin-aḫḫē, king of Akkad, had taken and brought to Babylon during the reign of Tiglath-pileser (I), king of Assyria—I had (them) brought out of Babylon after 418 years and I returned them to the city of E[kallātum], their (proper) place."[488] Although Sennacherib removed the Babylonian divine images from Babylon, his son Esarhaddon returned

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ian Inscriptions," *JANEH* 2 (2015): 19–54; for a long list (fifty-five occurrences from Tiglath-pileser I to Assurbanipal are identified), see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 123–44.

[482] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 281.

[483] RIMA 2:20, A.0.87.1, iv.32–39; for a discussion of the implications of divine images as door-keepers, see Kravitz, "Divine Trophies of War," 46–52; Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege," 38–39.

[484] *ANEP*, 181, no. 538 (BM 118934); Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pls. 92–93; also Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, fig. 5; for another example, see Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 7 (Or.Dr.III.C2).

[485] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 380–81, nos. 487–88 (Or.Dr.IV.24–25).

[486] Ibid., pls. 451–53, nos. 606–8 (Or.Dr.IV.32).

[487] Radner, "Review of *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*," 228; Johnson, "Stealing the Enemy's Gods"; Berlejung, "Shared Fates."

[488] RINAP 3.2:316, 223, 48–50.

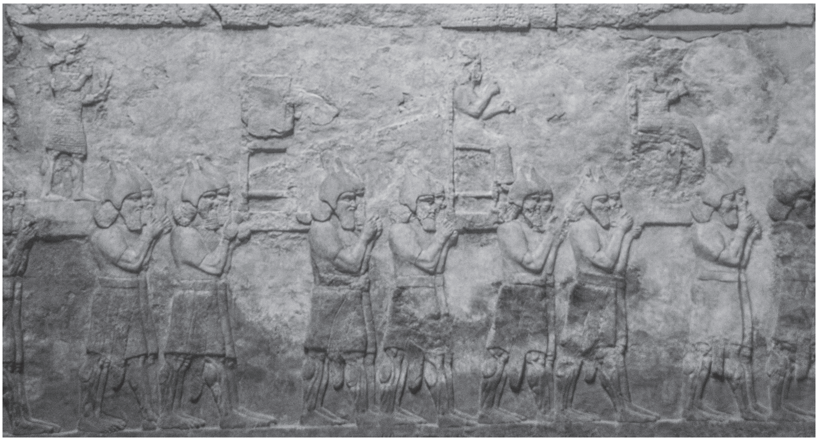

Fig. 5.28. Assyrian godnapping by Tiglath-pileser III. BM 118934. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

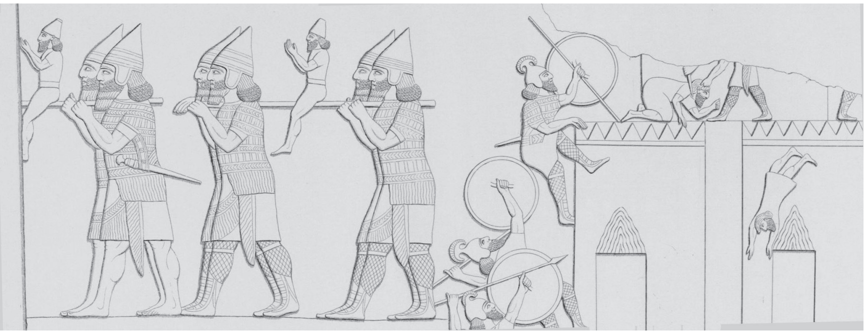

Fig. 5.29. Assyrian godnapping by Sennacherib. Or.Dr.IV.25. Drawing from Layard, *The Monuments of Nineveh*, pl. 75. Courtesy of the New York Public Library.

them.[489] Esarhaddon described himself as the one who "(re)built Esagil and Babylon, (and) restored the gods and goddess(es) who (live) in it; the one who returned the plundered gods of the lands from the city Aššur to their (proper) place and let (them) dwell in security."[490] Sennacherib had an inscription to Assur written on Marduk's bed and throne.[491] Esarhad-

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[489] 489. For more on returning divine images, see Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege," 32–37; for a list of captured divine images that were returned by the Assyrians to their owners, see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 277–83.

[490] 490. RINAP 4:14, 1, ii.22–23; also *COS* 4.39:175.

[491] 491. RINAP 3.2:229–31, 162.

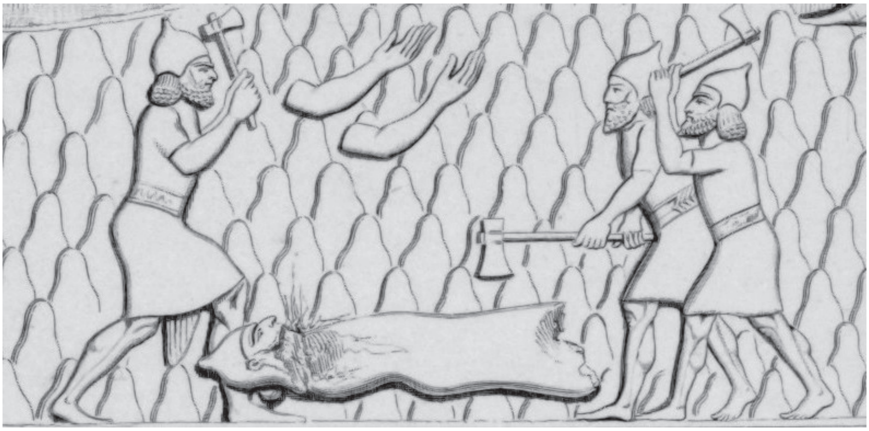

Fig. 5.30. Cutting up a divine image. Picture 1 of Salle XIII in Botta and Flandin, *Monument de Ninive*. Photo courtesy of the New York Public Library.

don returned to the Arab king the divine images that had been taken by Sennacherib, but he inscribed his name and Assur's name on them before returning them.[492] Even though the Assyrians plundered many divine images, one sign that they might have continued to be nervous about divine retribution from these deities is the lack of specific names supplied to identify the images.[493]

Although the data are unclear, it appears that many nations would simply create new divine images rather than attempt to retrieve them from Assyria.[494] On rare occasions, the Assyrians smashed the divine images of the enemy.[495] A relief from Sargon II depicts the smashing of a divine image (fig. 5.30).[496] Sennacherib reported that his soldiers treated the gods of Babylon harshly when they conquered the city: "My people seized and smashed the gods living inside it, and (then) they took their [possessions] (and) property."[497] Assurbanipal smashed the gods of Elam after he conquered the country.[498] In a few cases the Assyrians destroyed enemy temples, but this desecration of foreign temples did not happen often.[499] Along with Sargon II's burning of an Urartian temple and Sennacherib's destruction of Babylonian temples, Assurbanipal boasted about his destruction of Elamite cultic objects.[500]

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[492] RINAP 4:19, 1, iv.6–14; *COS* 4.39:177; for a list of royal inscriptions on foreign ritual items (all from Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal), see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 288–91.

[493] Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege."

[494] Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 196.

[495] For the short list of references, see Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege," 37–48; Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 118; for a survey of the defaced divine images from Mesopotamia that have been found archaeologically, see May, "'In Order to Make Him Completely Dead,'" 703–6.

[496] Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, fig. 4; Botta and Flandin, *Monument de Ninive*, pl. 2:140; Othmar Keel, *The Symbolism of the Biblical World: Ancient Near Eastern Iconography and the Book of Psalms*, trans. Timothy J. Hallett (New York:

> The ziqqurat of Susa made of blue glazed bricks I destroyed; I cut off its horns cast of shining bronze. (In)shushinak, god of their secret knowledge, whose dwelling is in secret lore, whose divine work no one had seen, (… list of gods …), whose divinity the Elamite kings had feared, (… list of gods …), their gods and goddesses with their jewellery, their goods and utensils, (and) together with *šangû*-priests (and) *puḫlalū* I brought to Ashur as booty. 32 statues of kings made (lit., cast) of silver, gold, bronze and alabaster from, Susa, Madaktu, Huradu together with the image of Ummanigash son of Umbadana, image of Ishtaranhundi, image of Hallusu and image of Tammaritu the latter, who on the word of Ashur and Ishtar made vassaldom (to me), I took to the land of Ashur. I removed protective figures, guards of the temple as much as there were; I tore out furious wild bulls belonging to the gates. I desecrated all the sacred places of Elam; (its) gods (and) goddesses I turned into ghosts.… Graves of their earlier and later kings, who did not obey Ashur and Istar, my lords; who made my royal forefathers tremble, I dug out, I demolished, I exposed to the Sun. Their bones I took to Assyria; I inflicted restlessness on their ghosts. I deprived them of funerary offerings and water libations![501]

Seabury, 1978), 233; Albenda, *Palace of Sargon King of Assyria*, pl. 133; however, this statue might be a royal statue rather than a divine image; see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 119–20; Schaudig, "Death of Statues and Rebirth of Gods," 132; Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege," 37–38.

[497] RINAP 3.2:316, 223, 48.

[498] *ARAB* 2:308, §808; *COS* 4.41:191; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 240.

[499] For a complete list of foreign temples destroyed in the Neo-Assyrian royal annals, see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 109–11.

[500] For Sargon's boast, see *ARAB* 2:91, §165; *COS* 4.42:210; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 805.

[501] May, "'In Order to Make Him Completely Dead,'" 720 (Prism A); also *ARAB* 2:309–10, §810; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 241.

5.6.5. Later Empires

Nebuchadnezzar II created a very large empire, though unfortunately much less is known about the details of the political results for his subjects than for the Assyrians.[502] The Babylonian Empire, while short-lived, encompassed the Assyrian Empire and expanded it slightly; the most well-known account of Babylonian expansion is the conquest of Judah recorded in the Old Testament (2 Kgs 24–25). Babylonian records downplay their imperial status. "From reading the inscriptions of the Neo-Babylonian kings one gains the feeling of a systematic denial of the fact of empire, contrasting with the very obvious exercise of it in practice."[503] However, this might also reflect reality, as textual and archaeological evidence indicates that the level of effective imperial control in the West during Babylonian times was less than during Assyrian rule.[504]

Some references to godnapping are associated with the Babylonians. Nabu-apla-iddina (a king of Babylon in the ninth century) described his attempt to restore Shamash to his temple. This selection describes the initial taking of the statue by his enemies. "Šamaš, the great lord, resident of Ebabarra which is inside Sippar, whom, during the confusion and disturbances in (the land of) Akkadê, the Suteans, the wicked enemy, had disturbed and obliterated (his) form—his (cultic) ordinances were forgotten, and his appearance and appurtenances disappeared, and no-one saw (them) anymore."[505] A letter to Assurbanipal reported that the gods had been taken from the city of Birat when it was destroyed by the Babylonians (SAA 18.146). The circumstances of a letter by Merodach-Baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II) are unclear, but he defends his archers, who have been accused of shooting arrows at the temple. Merodach-Baladan argues that his soldiers gave orders to defend the temple because of their "fear of the name of God (lit., 'gods')," showing they would not have desecrated the temple (SAA 17.158). In his sixth year Nebuchadnezzar II took spoils from the Arabs, including their gods.[506] The Old Testament records his destruction of the temple in Jerusalem (2 Kgs 25:9).

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[502] Vanderhooft, *Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets*, 89–114; Kuhrt, *Ancient Near East*, 2:590–97.

[503] Beaulieu, "World Hegemony," 56.

[504] Vanderhooft, "Babylonian Strategies of Imperial Control"; John W. Betlyon, "Neo-Babylonian Military Operations Other Than War in Judah and Jerusalem," in Lipschits, *Judah and the Judeans in the Neo-Babylonian Period*, 263–83.

[505] *COS* 2.135:365.

The Persians likewise conquered for themselves a vast empire, as Darius boasted in a text found in Persepolis: "This (is) the kingdom which I hold, from the Saca who are beyond Sogdiana, from there as far as Kush, from the Indus as far as Sardis, which Auramazda, the greatest of the gods, bestowed upon me."[507] Another inscription by Darius from Persepolis emphasized that all these people were ruled by the Persians and brought tribute: "By the favour of Auramazda, these (are) the countries of which I took possession together with these Persian people; they feared me (and) brought me tribute."[508] Tribute and tax were given from all parts of the empire that consisted of various material and human resources, though many of the details of this bureaucracy remain obscure.[509] Herodotus says that the Persians divided their empire into twenty provinces with a governor over each province; each province was required to pay a certain amount of tribute annually (*Hist.* 3.89–97).

The Persians appear to be quite open to local cults, especially as seen in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah in the Old Testament and the Cyrus Cylinder. Based on these two examples, many scholars have seen Cyrus as a generous leader toward his subjects.[510] This view of Cyrus and the Persians can be strengthened by the general lack of warfare in Persian art. Carl Nylander believes that Persian art portrays a more peaceful tone, arguing that the diversity of the art allows all visitors to feel at home in the Persian capital.[511] Further, "whatever the historical reality—the Achaemenid vision consciously and purposely seems to neglect the *dynamic* aspects of imperial propaganda, the old motifs of victory, triumph and humiliating subjection. It consistently elaborates, instead, the *static* dimension, that of peace, harmony and sharing a sanctified order under a benevolent rather than terrifying kingship."[512]

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[506] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 231.

[507] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 476 (Darius, Persepolis H and Hamadan).

[508] Ibid., 486 (Darius, Persepolis E); the inscription continues with a list of about twenty-five countries that now served Persia.

[509] For more on the giving of tribute in the Persian Empire, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 388–421; Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 669–729.

[510] Cyrus Masroori, "Cyrus II and the Political Utility of Religious Toleration," in *Religious Toleration: "The Variety of Rites" from Cyrus to Defoe*, ed. John Christian Laursen (New York: St. Martin's, 1999), 13–36; Wiesehöfer, "From Archaemenid Imperial Order to Sasanian Diplomacy;" this is also seen at the popular level in modern times with the attention given to Cyrus as a benevolent king and the Cyrus Cylinder as the first proclamation of human rights.

[511] Carl Nylander, "Achaemenid Imperial Art," in Larsen, *Power and Propaganda*, 356.

However, the extent of this openness has been debated, as other scholars argue that these two cases were the exceptions rather than the usual pattern.[513] Kuhrt thinks that it does not refer to entire people groups, but only those communities associated with the gods returning to their places (most of whom were associated with the Babylonian pantheon) for political reasons.[514] Further, the previous empires had also sent people back home, and the Persians also deported groups of people (see references in §5.2.5).[515] In reference to the art, the diversity can be explained as glorifying the king: he is so great he has all these people under him.[516] Although Ahura Mazda was an important deity, the Persians also worshiped other gods along with him.[517] According to Herodotus, Darius also destroyed several sanctuaries in the West (*Hist.* 6.96, 101), and the Persians interfered in religious activities in other areas as well.[518]

Later Persian kings seem to strengthen their worship of Ahura Mazda. When Darius put down the rebelling Saka of Central Asia in the year after the rebellion by the other kings (their king Skunkha was added to the far right of the Bisitun Inscription with a tall pointed hat), Darius added the fifth column of text. In contrast to the earlier columns, he now emphasized the rebels as faithless.[519] As noted in chapter 2, Darius was most likely not a crusader who sought to stop all worship of other gods, since he viewed rebellion against Persia as equivalent with rebellion against Ahura Mazda.[520] Xerxes worshiped his gods in a place where the foreign gods were previously worshiped: "And among those countries there were (some) where formerly the *daivas* had been worshipped. Afterwards by the favour of Auramazda I destroyed that place of the *daivas*, and I gave orders: 'The *daivas* shall not be worshipped any longer!' Where formerly the *daivas* have been worshipped, there I worshipped Auramazda at the proper time and with the proper ceremony."[521]

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[512] Ibid., 355.

[513] For a recent argument for this view (and how Persian imperial policy resembled Assyrian policy), see R. J. van der Spek, "Cyrus the Great, Exiles and Foreign Gods. A Comparison of Assyrian and Persian Policies on Subject Nations," in *Extraction and Control: Studies in Honor of Matthew W. Stolper*, ed. Wouter F. M. Henkelman, Michael Kozuh, and Christopher Woods, SAOC 68 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2014), 233–63.

[514] Amélie Kuhrt, "The Cyrus Cylinder and Achaemenid Imperial Policy," *JSOT* 25 (1983): 83–97; Kuhrt, "The Problem of Achaemenid 'Religious Policy,'" in *Die Welt der Götterbilder*, ed. Brigitte Groneberg and Hermann Spieckermann, BZAW 376 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008), 125–28.

[515] R. J. van der Spek, "Did Cyrus the Great Introduce a New Policy towards Subdued Nations? Cyrus in Assyrian Perspective," *Persica* 10 (1982): 278–83.

[516] Amélie Kuhrt, "The Persian Kings and Their Subjects: A Unique Relationship?," *OLZ* 96 (2001): 168.

[517] Kuhrt, "Problem of Achaemenid 'Religious Policy,'" 122–25.

[518] Ibid., 128–34.

5.6.6. West Semitic

In general, any political and religious results of warfare by the miniempires of the West Semitic world tended to be minimal and temporary. One example of this is Moab's subjection under Israel described in the Mesha Stela, which Mesha was able to reverse. The area around Carchemish was apparently a miniempire that conquered some of the surrounding area, but the lack of records makes it difficult to know many details.[522] Although its historicity is debated, the biblical texts describe a miniempire based in Jerusalem during the time of David and Solomon. The Aramean cities also were able to influence the surrounding cities in significant ways at various points.[523] Due to the inherent weakness of many in this area, the West Semitic nations often banded together in alliances to fight against an encroaching empire, especially in response to Neo-Assyrian aggression. The most famous example is the battle at Qarqar against Shalmaneser III.[524] Due to the need to find more allies, some wars were fought to force other nations to join an alliance against a greater power.[525]

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[519] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 127–28.

[520] Jacobs, "Kriegsentscheidung durch göttliche Gunst," 398.

[521] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 305 (XPh); for an introduction to this inscription and the *daivas*, see Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 550–53.

[522] For an introduction to Carchemish during this time period, see Bryce, *World of the Neo-Hittite Kingdoms*, 83–98.

[523] Ibid., 163–80; Younger, *Political History of the Arameans*.

[524] RIMA 3:23–24, A.0.102.2, ii.86–102.

[525] For several examples of this, see Nadav Na'aman, "Forced Participation in Alliances in the Course of the Assyrian Campaigns to the West," in Cogan, *Ah, Assyria*, 80–98; article reprinted as Nadav Na'aman, "Forced Participation in Alliances

The level of religious toleration and coercion is difficult to determine due to the limited sources. In EA 252, Labʾayu complained to the pharaoh about the theft of his god, presumably by another Canaanite. Mesha recorded that he plundered the vessels of YHWH and presented them to his god Chemosh.[526] The Old Testament records a pervasive tendency of the Israelites to worship the gods of the other nations, though the rejection of these gods played a prominent role in the final form of the Old Testament. Both Hezekiah and Josiah, kings of Judah, are said to have performed extensive reforms that involved the destruction of many religious items, even those associated with YHWH (2 Kgs 18:4; 23:4–20).

5.7. Other Responses to Victory

> When they had attained their aim [of pacifying the realm], they sang triumphal songs to show their happiness. They stored away the implements of war, erected the Spirit Terrace, and responded to the labors of the people to show that the time for rest had come.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 2

Along with all the responses to victory already detailed in the sections above, the victors would also sometime perform other actions, such as rituals and singing.[527] All ancient Near Eastern powers built monuments of some kind when they returned home not only to celebrate their victory, but to act ritualistically as well: if this kind of victory is portrayed often enough then it will cause it to continue happening.[528]

5.7.1. Egyptian

Although they are not often clearly described, the Egyptians performed triumphal rituals after their victories.[529] One short example derives from

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in the Course of the Assyrian Campaigns to the West," in *Ancient Israel and Its Neighbors: Interaction and Counteraction; Collected Essays: Volume 1* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 16–39.

[526] *COS* 2.23:138.

[527] For a helpful overview of different rituals done after battle (both victories and defeats), see Brad E. Kelle, "Postwar Rituals of Return and Reintegration," in Kelle, *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol in Biblical and Modern Contexts*, 205–41.

[528] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 23–55.

[529] Spalinger, "Egyptian New Kingdom Triumphs."

a text praising Merenptah in P.Anast. 2 "The victorious army has returned after it has triumphed in strength and power.… How delightful is your returning to Thebes—your chariot is weighed down with severed hands; Their chieftains are tied as captives in front of you, and you shall soon send them on to your Father, Amun Kamutef, Strong Bull of his Mother."[530] Another text from Merenptah refers to the pharaoh reviewing his triumph from the perspective of the Window of Appearances and making a victory speech to the people in the broad hall of the Palace.[531] Based on the limited data, Spalinger suggests that a triumphal return in the New Kingdom would have included the following, all of which were followed by giving spoils to the soldiers: (1) march on chariot back to home; (2) official reception or greeting at home (location not specified); (3) the arrival at the quay of Karnak; (4) the presentation to Amun with a ritual slaughter sometimes indicated.[532]

At the return from the battlefield, the people of the home city were rejoicing, as said about the return of Kamose from his defeat of the Hyksos: "The river bank was excited."[533] Songs were sung in praise of the pharaoh, such as the Poetical Stela of Thutmose III.[534] A trumpeter appears in a victory scene of Horemheb and the reliefs of Ramesses II at Abydos of the battle at Qadesh.[535] After Weni returned from campaigning, this song was sung.[536]

> This army returned in triumph after destroying the land of the Bedouin;
> This army returned in triumph after leveling the land of the sandfarers;
> This army returned in triumph after tearing down its sanctuaries;
> This army returned in triumph after cutting down its fig trees and vines;
> This army returned in triumph after setting fire to all its dwellings;

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[530] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 141.

[531] "Great Libyan War Inscription, Karnak," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.2:6, 8–9.

[532] Spalinger, "Egyptian New Kingdom Triumphs," 102.

[533] Ibid., 96.

[534] Ibid., 113.

[535] For Haremheb, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:161; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 241. For Ramesses II, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:24–25; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 284.

[536] For more on Egyptian victory songs, see Andrea M. Gnirs and Antonio Loprieno, "Krieg und Literatur," in Gundlach, *Militärgeschichte des pharaonischen Ägypten*, 245–52.

> This army returned in triumph after killing the troops in it by tens of thousands;
> This army returned in triumph after taking a great multitude of the troops therein as captives.[537]

Thutmose III included many references to celebrations after military victories in his writings. During his fifth campaign, Thutmose III recorded that his troops praised him and he provided offerings to the gods.

> This army offered acclamations to his majesty, giving praise to [Amon] for the victories which [he gave to] his son. They were pleasing to the heart of his majesty above everything. After this his majesty proceeded to the storehouse of offering[s], to give a sacrifice to Amon and to Harakhte consisting of oxen, calves, fowl, [for the life, prosperity, and health of] Menkheperre (Thutmose III), who giveth life forever.[538]

Thutmose III established "feasts of victory" (each lasted for five days) for Amun after his victories. "Behold, he landed at Thebes, his father, Amon, being ________. My majesty established for him a 'Feast of Victory' for the first time, when my majesty arrived from the first victorious expedition, overthrowing wretched Retenu (*Rṯnw*) and widening the borders of Egypt in the year 23."[539] After another campaign he recorded that "the army of his majesty was drunk and anointed with oil every day at a feast in Egypt."[540] Likewise, a stela of Seti I praised him because "his army is drunk with wine through the victory of his strong arm."[541]

After capturing the city of Thoth, Piye offered sacrifices in the temple of Thoth. The troops also celebrated. "The troops of the Hare nome proceeded to shout and sing, saying: 'How beautiful is Horus, appeased in his city, The Son of Re, Piye! May you celebrate for us a jubilee, As you protect the Hare nome!'"[542] Likewise, after Psamtik II heard about the victory of his troops, he offered sacrifices to all the gods of Egypt.[543] The Egyptians also built many monuments; the most well-known of these are in Egypt, but they also built monuments in the lands that they conquered. Thutmose III recorded that he set up a stela near the Euphrates.[544] Several of these stelae have been discovered in the Levant, including a prominent one in Beth Shean from Seti I.[545]

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[537] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 167–68; other translations in *ARE* 1:142–44.311–315; *AEL* 1:18–22; *ANET*, 227–28.

[538] *ARE* 2:195; also *COS* 2.2A:13.

[539] *ARE* 2:221.

[540] *ARE* 2:197.

[541] "Qasr Ibrim, Stela with Viceroy Amenemope," *RITA* 1.Seti I.46:82.

[542] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 482–83.

[543] *AEL* 3:86.

5.7.2. Hittite

References to celebration after a victory are scarce in Hittite literature.[546] Some of the rituals performed before battle described earlier in the book might also have been performed after the battle. Presumably feasts were also held. Like other kings, the Hittites built monuments after victories. Although the translation of the Hittite word is somewhat unclear, it appears that Hattusili III erected monuments in a few places where he defeated the enemy.[547]

5.7.3. Early Mesopotamian

Feasting was most likely an important part of celebrating victory in early Mesopotamia. A document from the Ur III dynasty listed the amount of food prepared for a returning army: "12 sheep, 83 ewes, 25 male and 35 female goats for the soldiers who have returned from expedition." Another text recounts the amount of alcohol for the returning troops: "1,200 liters of ordinary beer for the soldiers who have returned from expedition."[548]

Several kings refer to cleansing their weapons when they reached a body of water, which might refer to purification of weapons after battle.[549] Sargon II said that he "washed his weapons in the sea" when he conquered Eninmar.[550] Although he does not provide a reason, this is similar to the purification of weapons after a battle in the Sumerian myth *Lugal-e*. “Ninurta, after gathering the enemy in a battle-net, after erecting a great reed-altar, lord, heavenly serpent, purify your pickaxe and your mace!”[551] Later in the story he fulfills the command: “The lord … his belt and mace in water, he washed the blood from his clothes, the hero wiped his brow, he made a victory-chant over the dead body.”[552] Another Sumerian myth entitled “The Return of Ninurta to Nipru” includes a similar idea when Ninurta makes the following request: “Let my father therefore bring in my battle trophies and weapons for me. Let Enlil bathe my heroic arms. Let him pour holy water on the fierce arms which bore my weapons.”[553] Yahdun-Lim also describes washing in the sea when he “went to the shore of the sea and made a great offering (befitting) his kingship to the Sea. His troops bathed themselves in the Sea.[554] However, it is also possible that this ritual was a statement of world domination rather than purification, as the sea marked the limit of the known world.[555]

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[544] *COS* 2.2B:15.

[545] *COS* 2.4B:25–26.

[546] Prechel, "Wenn die Soldaten aus dem Lande ziehen …," 385.

[547] *COS* 1.77:200 (*CTH* 81); Kang, *Divine War*, 70.

[548] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 5–6 (SAT 2, 193 and UCP 9–2-2, 7); see also references to feasts for returning soldiers in RIME 3.2:239, E3.2.1.3.

[549] For the argument and the citation of the following texts, see Jason A. Riley, "Does YHWH Get His Hands Dirty? Reading Isaiah 63:1–6 in Light of Depictions of Divine Postbattle Purification," in Kelle, *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol*, 247; Kelle, "Postwar Rituals of Return and Reintegration," 222–26.

[550] RIME 2:14, E2.1.1.2. 47–61; see also *ANEHST*, 18; see also Naram-Sin in RIME 2:97, E2.1.4.3, iv.28–32.

The kings also built many statues to celebrate victory. Rimush “fashioned a statue of himself and dedicated it to the god Enlil *for his well-being*.”[556] After his conquest of Magan, Naram-Sin celebrated in this way. “In their mountains he quarried diorite stone and brought it to Agade, his city, and fashioned a statue of himself.”[557] A hymn about Shulgi mentions musicians and singers praising him after a victory. “The sim and ala-drums resounded for him, The tigi-drums$^{?}$ [played] for him music. ‘My king,… […], you have destroyed the foreign land, you have plundered (its) cities, Like a wild bull … the mountain …’—Sang the singers for him in a song.”[558] A visionary text portrays Zimri-Lim returning in triumph on a pair of boats while the people are praising him from the banks of the river: “Kingship, scepter, throne, reign, upper and lower land ⸢are given⸣ to

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[551] ETCSL, no. 1.6.2, ll. 126–27.

[552] ETCSL, no. 1.6.2, ll. 302–303.

[553] ETCSL, no. 1.6.1, ll. 152–154.

[554] RIME 4:606, E4.6.8.2, 46–50.

[555] Robert Rollinger, “From Sargon of Agade and the Assyrian Kings to Khusrau I and Beyond: On the Persistence of Ancient Near Eastern Traditions,” in Lanfranchi, *Leggo!*, 725–26.

[556] RIME 2:49, E2.1.2.4, 79–86.

[557] RIME, 2:117, E2.1.4.13, ii.8–16.

[558] Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 86–87 (Šulgi D, 366–370).

Zimri-Lim."[559] The hymn to Inanna describes what appears to be a victory procession.[560] The antiphon is "Her coming forth is (that of) a warrior," and many parts of the hymn fit with the genre of a victory celebration, including music, warriors in martial gear, ritual combat, and the parading of captives.

> They (themselves are girt with implements of battle,—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—
> spears, the arms of battle, are in their hands,—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading.
> Their right arms are clothed with cloth in male fashion,—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—the great queen of heaven, Inanna, I will hail!
> On their left arms they have pulled the cloth down and off—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—the great queen of heaven, Inanna, I will hail!
> Playfully, with painted buttocks, they engage in single combat—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—the oldest child of the Moon, Inanna, I will hail!
> (Captive) lads in neck stocks bewail to her (their fate) —before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—
> Maidens and crones, curling the(ir) hair (as harlots) —before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—
> Daggers and clubs rage before her—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—
> The *kurgarûs* mounted (on chariots) swing the clubs—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—
> Gore is covering the daggers, blood sprinkles—before holy Inanna, before her eyes, they are parading—
> In the courtyard, the (place of) assembly of the temple administrators, they are shedding blood, (as) loudly resounds there (gay music of) *tigi*-harps, tambourines, and lyres.[561]

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[559] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 267 (ARM 10.10 = ARM 26.236 = LAPO 18.1139).

[560] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 125.

[561] Jacobsen, *Harps That Once*, 116–17.

5.7.4. Assyrian

The triumphal celebration of the king after a victory was an important event in Assyrian life.[562] The Assyrian kings often spoke of washing their weapons in the sea and performing sacrifices when they reached the Mediterranean Sea. When he reached the sea in the land of Nairi, Shalmaneser III said "I washed my weapons in the sea (and) made sacrifices to the gods."[563] The soldiers apparently celebrated victory on the battlefield and in the camps; several reliefs depict rituals being conducted in camps, most likely after victories.[564] Music played an important role in celebrating victories.[565] For example, a relief from Assurnasirpal II shows a musician playing while a soldier carries back a severed head of an enemy.[566] After Rusa, the king of Urartu, fled before him, Sargon II returned to his camp in triumph: "I entered my encampment in joy and celebration, with players on lyres and flutes."[567] A relief from Assurbanipal depicts Elamite musicians playing music after the Assyrian defeat of the Elamites.[568] It is unclear what kind of music they are playing, as they could either be mourning their defeat or celebrating the victory of the Assyrians.[569] As Macgregor summarizes, "Everyone celebrates an Assyrian triumph, even foreign musicians."[570] A relief from Sennacherib might depict a similar phenomenon with musicians who appear to be Judean prisoners playing after a battle (fig. 5.31).[571]

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[562] For more on this topic, see Karlheinz Deller, "Neuassyrische Rituale für den Einsatz der Götterstreitwagen," *BaM* 23 (1992): 341–46; Julian Reade, "Religious Ritual in Assyrian Sculpture," in *Ritual and Politics in Ancient Mesopotamia*, ed. Barbara Nevling Porter, AOS 88 (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2005), 19–22, 50–53; Pierre Villard, "Les cérémonies triomphales en Assyrie," in Abrahami, *Les armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 257–70; Natalie Naomi May, "Triumph as an Aspect of the Neo-Assyrian Decorative Program," in Wilhelm, *Organization, Representation, and Symbols of Power*, 461–88; Davide Nadali, "Outcomes of Battle: Triumphal Celebrations in Assyria," in Spalinger, *Rituals of Triumph in the Mediterranean World*, 75–94.

[563] RIMA 3:9, A.0.102.1, 34–35; for other examples, see Rollinger, "From Sargon of Agade," 726–29.

[564] Reade, "Religious Ritual in Assyrian Sculpture," 15–19, 42–49; Nadali, "Outcomes of Battle," 77–83.

[565] For many reliefs depicting musicians in a martial context, see May, "Triumph as an Aspect of the Neo-Assyrian Decorative Program."

[566] De Backer, "Cruelty and Military Refinements," 34 (BM 124550).

[567] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 799; also *COS* 4.42:205.

[568] *ANEP*, 64, no. 204 (BM 124802); Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 308–13, no. 386 (Or.Dr.II.6).

[569] Sherry Lou Macgregor, *Beyond Hearth and Home: Women in the Public*

The Assyrian king also celebrated a triumphal return when he returned to his capital.[572] The Akkadian phrase for the king's triumphal procession (*erāb āli*) is also used to describe the entrance of the god into the city during the *akītu*-festival.[573] Evidence from a relief of Assurbanipal indicates that lion hunts might have been connected with these royal triumphs.[574] The letters to the god (such as Sargon II's account of his eighth campaign) might also have been read publicly as part of this triumph.[575] A ritual from the time of Assurbanipal describes what should happen during this time of triumph. Although it was sometimes performed as part of the *akītu*-festival, it was also performed in the field. Its length precludes inclusion here but in the quotation below May summarizes the various steps of the ritual in which the king acts out his part as the victor of the battle and the *kurgarrûs* and *assinnūs* act out the Assyrian and enemy armies.

> An installation of the *sarrānāte*
> The *ḫitpānī*-sacrifices
> A *narû* sings praising a hero, which I believe to be a king
> Performance of *kurgarrûs* and *assinnūs*
> Ritual with an arrow and a bow, carried on by the king and involving a herald
> The officials ride the chariot of Belat-dunani and mount an arrow
> Removal of the *ḫitpānī*-sacrifices
> The king rides his chariot
> The officials perform a ritual voodoo-like shooting of an enemy or his image and say prayer (?-broken)
> The king performs the ceremony of "capturing" the enemy

Sphere in Neo-Assyrian Society, SAAS 21 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2012), 36–41.

[570] Ibid., 46.

[571] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 398–99, no. 511 (Or.Dr.VI.27 = BM 124947).

[572] Nadali, "Outcomes of Battle," 83–89.

[573] May, "Triumph as an Aspect of the Neo-Assyrian Decorative Program," 461.

[574] Elnathan Weissert, "Royal Hunt and Royal Triumph in a Prism Fragment of Ashurbanipal (82-5-22,2)," in Parpola, *Assyria 1995*, 339–58.

[575] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 49, 250.

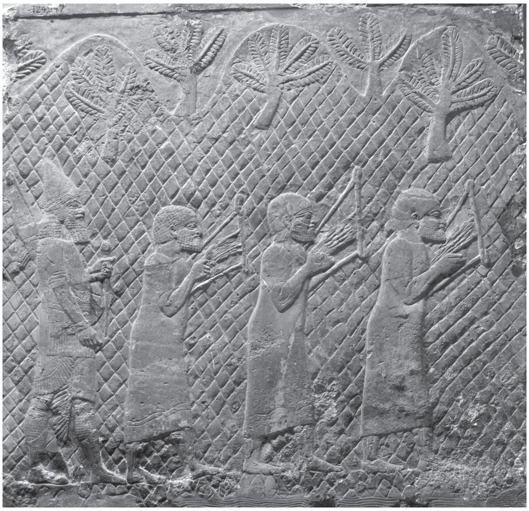

Fig. 5.31. Judean musicians after the defeat at Lachish by Sennacherib. BM 124947. Photo courtesy of Mike Peel (www.mikepeel.net), Wikimedia Commons.

> Another sacrifice accompanied by raising jewelry by the king and shields by officials
> The triumphal entrance to the camp
> A royal banquet and celebration inside a portable sanctuary (*qersu*) closes the series of ritual actions
> At the end of the ritual after the break: The sequence of rites terminates with the libation over the head of the lion: prey of the ritual hunt. The broken part of the text preceding the libation contained, most probably, the royal ritual hunt or a performance representing it.[576]

An ivory from the ninth century depicts a female musician on the city walls in front of a large warrior, presumably celebrating his return.[577] When Esarhaddon defeated the rebel kings Abdi-Milkuti and Sanda-uarri, he brought their severed heads to Nineveh and celebrated their defeat. This text preserves what might be the victory chant that was sung at that time, as immediately after this it says that, "I paraded in the squares of Nineveh with singer(s) and lyre(s)."[578] (Tashritu was the seventh month of the year, while Addaru was the twelfth month.)

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[576] May, "Triumph as an Aspect of the Neo-Assyrian Decorative Program," 463; see her article for a translation of the ritual text and reliefs depicting the ritual.

[577] Macgregor, *Beyond Hearth and Home*, 44–46.

[578] RINAP 4:17, 1, iii.37–38; also *COS* 4.39:176.

> In Tašrītu—the head of Abdi-Milkūti
> In Addaru—the head of Sanda-uarri![579]

After a successful campaign, Assurbanipal entered Nineveh with singers and dancers. "With the loot of Elam, the spoil of Gambulu, which at the command of Ashur my hands had captured, with singers to make music, I entered into Nineveh with joy."[580] He also celebrated in Arbela.

> I, Ashurbanipal, king of the land of Ashur, after I made sacrifices to Shatri, I performed festival (rites) of *akītu*, grasped the reins of (the chariot) of Ishtar; in it (together with) Dunanu, Shamgunu, Aplaja and the cut-off head of Teumman, king of Elam, whom Ishtar my lady placed in my hands, I made a triumphal entrance into Arbela in joy.[581]

A relief from Assurbanipal depicts him and his queen feasting in his garden, surrounded by servants, musicians, and food. Hanging off a tree to the left of the relief is a severed head, most likely that of the Elamite king Teumman.[582] The Assyrian kings also built many monuments to commemorate their victories.[583] Shalmaneser III recorded on the Balawat Gates that he made a stela of himself after a victory (fig. 5.32).

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[579] RINAP 4:17, 1, iii.32–33; *COS* 4.39:176. This theory was published in Hayim Tadmor, "An Assyrian Victory Chant and Related Matters," in Frame, *From the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea*, 269–76; repr. Tadmor, "An Assyrian Victory Chant and Related Matters," in "*With My Many Chariots I Have Gone Up the Heights of the Mountains*": *Historical and Literary Studies on Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel*, ed. Mordechai Cogan (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2011), 347–60.

[580] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 73 (Edition B, vi.52–56); also *ARAB* 2:334, §865; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 227.

[581] May, "Triumph as an Aspect of the Neo-Assyrian Decorative Program," 473 (epigraph 34; K.2674); May also includes another epigraph recording that Assurbanipal poured wine over the head of Teumman as part of a ritual. For more on Assurbanipal's treatment of the head of Teumman, see Dominik Bonatz, "Ashurbanipal's Headhunt: An Anthropological Perspective," *Iraq* 66 (2004): 93–101.

[582] *ANEP*, 155, no. 451 (BM 124920); Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 64–65, no. 451 (BM 124920).

[583] For a discussion of these and their function, see Ann Shafer, "Assyrian Royal Monuments on the Periphery: Ritual and the Making of Imperial Space," in Chang, *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context*, 133–59.

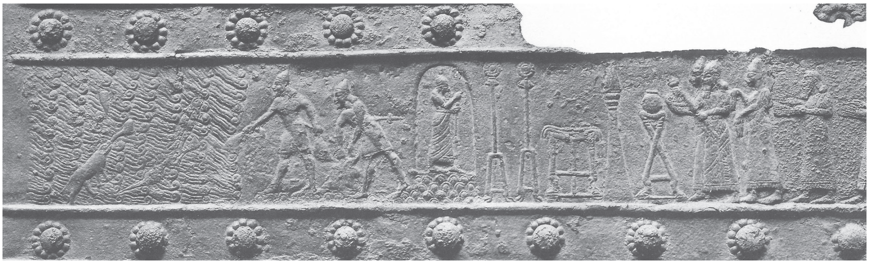

Fig. 5.32. Building an image of Shalmaneser III. Band 1 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 1.

5.7.5. Later Empires

Few details remain about victory celebrations in the later empires. The Babylonian king most likely displayed plunder and prisoners from his successful battles as part of the final days of the annual *akītu* festival, celebrating the victories Marduk had given to him.[584] Esarhaddon describes such an event in Assyrian times. "At new year, in the first month, yearly, without ceasing, let me inspect in it all of the thoroughbreds, mules, camels, military equipment, implements of war, (and) all of the captured enemy soldiers."[585] As elsewhere the Babylonians and Persians built monuments to commemorate their victories; the Bisitun Inscription is the most famous of these. Anticipating those who might be skeptical of his account, Darius boasted that not everything he had done was written down in the inscription so the account would be believable.[586]

5.7.6. West Semitic

A Megiddo ivory depicts a scene of feasting and music when the captives were brought home.[587] Victory songs are common through the Old Testament (though none are in Kings); the most famous examples are the Song of the Sea after the exodus (Exod 15:1–21) and Deborah's song (Judg 5). The women are often said to meet the returning victorious soldiers with singing and dancing (Exod 15:20–21; 1 Sam 18:6–9).[588] The Baal Cycle might refer to purification after battle when Anat washes her hands after the battle.[589] The most prominent case of purification after a battle in the Old Testament is after the defeat of Midian, when the warriors were required to wash themselves after the battle (Num 31).[590] Even the small kingdoms of the West Semitic world built monuments, such as the Mesha Stela and the Tel Dan stela. The book of Kings indicates that the martial deeds of the Judean and Israelite kings were recorded in books, such as the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel (1 Kgs 14:19) and the Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah (1 Kgs 14:29).

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[584] 584. Julye Bidmead, *The Akītu Festival: Religious Continuity and Royal Legitimation in Mesopotamia*, GDNE 2 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2002), 96; Amélie Kuhrt, "Usurpation, Conquest and Ceremonial: From Babylon to Persia," in *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies*, ed. David Cannadine and Simon Price (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 35.

[585] 585. RINAP 4:25, 1, vi.58–60; also *COS* 4.39:179.

[586] 586. Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 148 (DB §§58–61).

[587] 587. *ANEP*, 111, no. 332 (Rockefeller Museum 38.780).

5.8. Responses to Defeat

> In cases of great defeat do not punish anyone, for then both the upper and lower ranks will assume the disgrace falls on them. If the upper ranks reproach themselves they will certainly regret their errors, while if the lower ranks feel the same they will certainly try to avoid repeating the offense.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 2

Since it was primarily the victors who wrote the inscriptions that remain today, we do not usually know how the subjugated responded to defeat in battle. Based on the few texts that have remained, the most common response to a defeat was a lament. Rituals were sometimes performed after a defeat, as well as castigation of the troops for their incompetence. This section will also look at the few admissions of defeat and recognition of dead or injured friendly soldiers.

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[588] On postbattle processions, see Kelle, "Postwar Rituals of Return and Reintegration," 218–19.

[589] *KTU* 2 1.3 ii.1–iii.8; for discussion see Riley, "Does YHWH Get His Hands Dirty?," 252–54.

[590] Niditch, "War, Women, and Defilement."

5.8.1. Egyptian

The most common response to defeat in Egypt was to pretend it did not happen. A very small number of reliefs depict dead or injured Egyptian or allied troops.[591] Pepi-Nahkt (during the Sixth Dynasty) wrote that Pepi II sent him to the Asiatics to gather the bodies of several slain Egyptians.[592] Admissions of defeat can be found in some texts, such as the Admonitions of Ipuwer and the Prophecies of Neferti, though it appears that these texts either refer to the distant past or constitute a purely literary topos that has no basis in historical reality.[593] The author of the Instructions of Merikare (perhaps Meriyebre?) recorded that he had done something wrong.[594]

> Troops will fight troops as the ancestors foretold; Egypt fought in a graveyard, destroying tombs in vengeful destruction. As I did it, so it happened, as is done to one who strays from god's path. Do not deal evilly with the Southland, you know what the residence foretold about it; as this happened so that may happen. ⌜Before they had trespassed⌝… I attacked This ⌜straight to⌝ its southern border ⌜at Taut⌝, I engulfed it like a flood; King Meriyebre, justified, had not done it; Be merciful on account of it, … renew the treaties.
>
> Lo, a shameful deed occurred in my time: The nome of This was ravaged; though it happened through my doing, I learned it after it was done. There was retribution for what I had done, for it is evil to destroy, useless to restore what one has damaged, to rebuild what one has demolished. Beware of it! A blow is repaid by its like, to every action there is a response.[595]

On other occasions the pharaohs blamed their soldiers for a setback. Thutmose III rebuked his soldiers for being too quick to plunder after the battle, allowing the enemy time to escape into Megiddo and denying him a rapid victory.[596] Ramesses II rebuked his troops at the battle of Qadesh for not fighting along with him (as recorded in the Poem version of the account).

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[591] For a list, see Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 371–72.

[592] *AEL* 1:163.

[593] For the Admonitions of Ipuwar, see *AEL* 1:149–61; *ANET*, 441–44; *COS* 1.42:93–98; for the Prophecies of Nefertiti, see *AEL* 1:140–44; *ANET*, 444–46; *COS* 1.45:106–10.

[594] Hoffmeier, *Akhenaten and the Origins of Monotheism*, 35–36.

[595] *AEL* 1:102, 105.

[596] *ARE* 2:184; *COS* 2.2A:11.

> What about you, my captains, soldiers,
> My charioteers, who shirked the fight?
> Does a man not act to be acclaimed in his town,
> When he returns as one brave before his lord?
> A name made through combat is truly good,
> A man is ever respected for valor.
> Have I not done good to any of you,
> That you should leave me alone in the midst of the battle?
> You are lucky to be alive at all,
> You who took the air while I was alone!
> Did you not know it in your hearts:
> I am your rampart of iron!
> What will men say when they hear of it,
> That you left me alone without a comrade,
> That no chief, charioteer, or soldier came,
> To lend me a hand while I was fighting?[597]

Finally, Piye rebuked his army for not finishing off the enemy and determined to go to the battlefield himself to fix the situation. "Then His Majesty raged because of it like a panther: 'Have they allowed a remnant among the troops of Lower Egypt so as to let go an escapee among them to relate his campaign, not killing them to exterminate the last of them?"[598] Later, he berated his army again. "Then His Majesty burst forth to revile his army, raging at it like a panther: 'Do they endure while your combat is such that my business in delayed?"[599]

5.8.2. Hittite

In the humorous account of the siege of Urshu, the Hittite king mocked his subordinates for their incompetence after they broke the battering ram: "The king was furious, (his) face (was) unpleasant—'They are always bringing me foul news! May the Storm-god wash you away!'"[600] Likewise, after Kassu reported to the Hittite king that the enemy had slipped by him, the king berated him for not seeing the enemy and commanded him to be more diligent in the future. "So—was that enemy enchanted, that you did

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597. *AEL* 2:69–70. Text also found in *COS* 2.5A:37; *RITA* 2.3A:11.
598. Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 480.
599. Ibid., 481.
600. Beckman, "Siege of Uršu Text," 25.

not recognize him? (From now on) be on the highest state of alert against the enemy."[601]

Since the Hittites had many rituals, it is not surprising that they performed rituals after a defeat. Although the ritual itself is missing, one tablet describes its function in this way: "When it gets scary in the field for a 'lord of the army,' or when all goes right for the enemy in battle, and it doesn't go right for our boys, (one performs the following ritual)."[602] A ritual on the same tablet might refer to a similar situation.

> Throw hot fir cones and a hot stone into water. As the fir cones and the stone hiss and then cool and become silent, so may the manhood, battle, and renown of you and your troops likewise grow cold and be extinguished. Like the stone, let them become deaf and dumb. Let their bowstring and arrow and slingstone (?) be put (down). And let it grow cold. The gods march on our side. The (former) kings speak on our behalf. The multitude has hurried to our side. The gods have given boys to our army with manhood and bravery (?).[603]

One ritual was designed to be used when the enemy attacked a city; the ritual is broken but involves such elements as sending a horse against the enemy after it has visited a mare, rolling a wheel against the enemy, offering sheep, and washing braziers.[604] Another ritual to be done after a defeat killed a human, most likely a prisoner of war.

> If the troops are defeated by the enemy, then they prepare the offerings behind the river as follows: Behind the river they sever a human, a billy-goat, a puppy (and) a piglet. On one side they set halves and on the other side they set the (other) halves. But in front (of these) they make a gate of hawthorn and stretch a *tiyamar* up over it. Then on one side they burn a fire before the gate (and) on the other side they burn a fire. The troops go through, but when they come alongside the river, they sprinkle water over them(selves).[605]

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[601] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 105 (*HKM* 6; *CTH* 186).

[602] Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 73 (*KUB* 7.58, ll. i 18–22; *CTH* 779/426).

[603] Ibid. (*KUB* 7.58, ll. i 1–17 (CTH 779/426).

[604] For a summary of the ritual see ibid., 73–74 (*KUB* 9.1 ll. ii 13–iii.30; *CTH* 428).

[605] Billie Jean Collins, "The Puppy in Hittite Ritual," *JCS* 42 (1990): 219–20 (*KUB* 17.28 ll. iv 45–55; *CTH* 730); also *COS* 1.61:160–61.

The plague prayers of Mursili II, in which the Hittite king prays to the gods to take away the plague that had been brought to the Hittites by prisoners of war, represents at least a recognition of difficulties in the present time.[606] An oracle about foreign troops possessing captives implies a defeat as well. "Concerning whether any foreign troops will mistreat the civilian captives: liver and edge favorable. It will persist because of (this) sign."[607]

5.8.3. Early Mesopotamian

Laments after defeats are well known from early Mesopotamia. A goddess from Old Babylonian times lamented that it appears only her city has been destroyed.[608] The most famous lament is the Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur; this selection describes the devastation caused in the city.

> In its walls, breaches were made—the people moan,
> In its lofty city gates, which were accustomed to promenades, corpses were piled.
> In its boulevards, which were built in grandeur, heads were sown like seeds.
> In all its streets that were accustomed to promenades, corpses were piled.
> In the places where the dances of the land had taken place, people were stacked in heaps.
> The land's blood filled the ditches like copper and tin.
> Its corpses, like sheep fat left in the sun, of themselves melted away.
> Its men who were slain with the axe—(their) heads were not covered with cloth.
> Like a gazelle caught up in a trap, (their) mouths bit the dust.
> Its men whom the spear had struck down were not bound with bandages.
> As if in the place where their mothers gave birth to them, they lay in their blood.
> Its men who were brought to an end by the battle mace were not *bandaged*.
> Its men—though not drunk with beer—drooped neck over shoulder.

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[606] Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 47–69 (*CTH* 376–379); also *COS* 1.60:158; *ANET*, 394–96; *ANEHST*, 261–66.

[607] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline, *Ahhiyawa Texts*, 227.

[608] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 153 (UET 6/2:403, 1′–10′).

> He who stood up to the weapon, by the weapon was crushed—the people moan,
> He who ran away from it was *stirred* by the storm—the people moan.
> The weak and the strong of Ur, both perished in famine,
> Old women and old men who could not leave the house were consumed by fire.
> Little ones lying in their mother's bosom, like fish were carried off by the waters;
> Their nursemaids with strong embrace—(their) embrace was pried open.
> The land's good sense vanished—the people moan,
> The land's counsel was swallowed by a swamp—the people moan.
> The mother looked away from her daughter—the people moan,
> The father turned away from his son—the people moan.
> In the city, the wife was abandoned, the child was abandoned, possessions were scattered about.
> The black-headed people were driven off *from* their *strongholds*.[609]

Sin-iddinam, a king of Larsa, called on the god Utu to help him after a defeat in battle, a rare admission of defeat by a king.

> This is what Sin-iddinam, king of Larsa, your servant, says: In your city Larsa, your heart's choice, a plague has broken out, The broad streets where they passed the days in play are filled with silence. Your goodly troops who were subdued have returned, they have been finished off like thread for tearing. Your young men are scared like running pigs, they have been destroyed, they have been made to stand there. They have broken the image of self-respect of my people, they have finished them off by themselves, They have snatched(?) the little ones from their parents on an evil day. The visage of my people has been changed into a foreign(?) face, The troops who were subjugated are (now) freed, (while) the nation emerges covered as with a garment. Oh youthful Utu, in your city Larsa you stand aloof like an enemy/stranger.[610]

A few documents record the death of victorious soldiers. Ur-Nanshe, a king of Lagash, said several times that he "buried (his own casualties with honour) in tumuli."[611] Several documents from Ebla record what appears to be the number of dead soldiers of the victors.[612] The Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sin records that his entire army was destroyed, but it is a later legend and is most likely not very historically accurate.[613] A genealogical text from Babylon remembers "the soldier(s) who fell while on perilous campaigns for their (lit: 'his') lord" when referring to earlier generations.[614] Ibal-Adad supported Zimri-Lim in his conquest of Mari by sending him troops, and when several of those troops died he requested that Zimri-Lim bury them (ARM 28.77).[615]

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[609] Samet, *Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur*, 64–67; also *COS* 1.166:535–39; *ANET*, 455–63, 612–19; *ANEHST*, 68–72.

[610] Hallo, "Royal Correspondence of Larsa," 99.

[611] RIME 1:92, E.1.9.1.6b, ii.8–9; several other early presargonic kings employ the same expression. However, as noted by the parenthesis, the text could also refer

5.8.4. Assyrian

On occasion the Assyrian kings referred to their predecessors committing a wrong or suffering a defeat. The most famous of these is the Sin of Sargon, in which Sennacherib writes about the sin of his father Sargon II that led to his death and Sennacherib's attempt to right the wrong done by his father. However, it is probable that this document actually came from Sennacherib's son Esarhaddon, as it fits his life circumstances better.[616] The specific sin of Sargon II is unclear. "Was it because he … the gods of [Assyria] [and] above the gods of the land of Babylon … [and] did not [keep] the treaty-oath of the king of gods [that Sargon, my father, in a foreign land] was killed, and was not [buried] in his own house?"[617]

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to burying the enemy dead, which would be more common in warfare inscriptions; for a discussion, see Gebhard Selz and Daniela Niedermayer, "The Burials after the Battle: Combining Textual and Visual Evidence," in *It's a Long Way to a Historiography of the Early Dynastic Period(s)*, ed. Reinhard Dittmann and Gebhard Selz, AVO 15 (Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 2015), 387–404; Sebastian Fink, "Battle-Descriptions in Mesopotamian Sources I: Presargonic and Sargonic Period," in Ulanowski, *Religious Aspects of War*, 53.

[612] Archi, "Men at War in the Ebla Period," 29–32.

[613] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 263–368; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 344–56.

[614] J. J. Finkelstein, "The Genealogy of the Hammurapi Dynasty," *JCS* 20 (1966): 97.

[615] For more on the fate of corpses, see Guichard, "Aspects Religieux de la Guerre a Mari," 45–46.

[616] Hayim Tadmor, Benno Landsberger, and Simo Parpola, "The Sin of Sargon and Sennacherib's Last Will," *SAAB* 3 (1989): 3–51; Ann M. Weaver, "The 'Sin of Sargon' and Esarhaddon's Reconception of Sennacherib: A Study in Divine Will, Human Politics and Royal Ideology," *Iraq* 66 (2004): 61–66.

[617] Weaver, "'Sin of Sargon,'" 63.

In a rare moment of honesty, Sennacherib admitted that his army was defeated during his first campaign against Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II) of Babylon in an open-field battle. However, this defeat was mitigated by the absence of the king in the battle and his vigorous response to hearing the news of the defeat.[618] The letters contain more references to Assyrian defeats. An unknown Assyrian official reported to Tiglath-pileser III that a major Assyrian force had been defeated by the Urartians. "The Rab-shakeh, when he went in with armed forces, Ursa came (and) defeated him. Not one of them got away. He (Ursa) is coming on (and) is setting up camp against the fortresses of the Rab-shakeh. He is going to do battle. May the king know (and) take *appropriate action*."[619] A letter to Assurbanipal reported on the distressing events in Babylon for the Assyrians.

> Owing to the fact that from the beginning we were doomed, together with our houses, we are detested by the Pukudeans and the Sealanders, who are planning evil against your temples. They are destroying us by killing and capturing (our people). Everything is in ruins: we shall (soon) become their prey. Now the Sealanders, the Pukudeans, and the Gurasimmu are being mobilized against us.[620]

Although not a statement of defeat, the Assyrians mentioned on occasion that they lost troops in a battle. At the end of his account of his eighth campaign (which is one of the letters to a god), Sargon noted several Assyrian casualties: "(Herewith) one charioteer, two horsemen, and three scouts (of those who) were killed." This might not have been the total number killed, but a small group to honor all those who had fallen.[621] The exact same phrase is in two other letters to a god from Esarhaddon and Shalmaneser IV.[622] References in the letters to widows of fallen soldiers also witnesses to the reality of dead Assyrian soldiers (SAA 1.21). A letter to Esarhaddon concerns the request of a son whose father (a recruitment officer) had died in enemy lands (SAA 16.105). A letter from Bel-ibni (during the reign of Assurbanipal) reported a group of 150 Assyrian soldiers had defeated a large group of 400 enemy soldiers, but 20 Assyrians were wounded (*ABL* 520 = *SLA* 43).

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[618] RINAP 3.1:33, 1, 21–22.

[619] Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 120 (SAA 19.71; ND 2463).

[620] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 17 (*ABL* 1241 = *SLA* 18); a similar situation is found in *ABL* 1274 = *SLA* 19, where the people of Ur beg for help from Assurbanipal as hunger has caused others to desert to Shamash-shum-ukin.

[621] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 812; also *COS* 4.42:215; the meaning of the word translated here as "scouts" (*kallāpu*) is uncertain; see note in ch. 4, "Horses (and Other Animals)."

[622] RINAP 4:85, 33, iv.13′ and RIMA 3:244, A.0.105.3, rev.1′–4′; for a discussion of the letters to the gods, see Philippe Talon, "Cases of Deviation in Neo-Assyrian

During his eighth campaign Sargon II described the response of the Urartian king Rusa to news that the city of Musasir had fallen to the Assyrians: "Rusa heard and fell to the ground. He ripped his garments, (and) he tore out his hair and beat his breast with his fists. He threw himself on his stomach. His heart stood still, his insides burned, in his mouth were painful lamentations."[623] However, Assyrian laments are scarce.

5.8.5. Later Empires

Ninurta-kudurri-usur admitted that thirty-eight of his troops were wounded in a battle, but said that none of them died.[624] The Babylonian Chronicles are well-known for recording defeats of all sides, including the Babylonians. The following selection records the victory of Tiglath-pileser III over Babylon. "The third year (of the reign) of (Nabû)-mukīn-zēri, Tiglath-pileser having gone down into Akkad, he ravaged the Bīt-Amukāni and captured (Nabû)-mukīn-zēri."[625] Although the Greeks recorded many Persian defeats, these remain unattested in Persian inscriptions. Xenophon recorded Cyrus's grief at the death of his ally Abradatas in battle and his consolation of the widow (*Cyr.* 7.3).

5.8.6. West Semitic

A letter from Ugarit apparently describes the upcoming fall of the city, though the identity of the writer, recipient, and the conqueror is not known. "To *ġrdn*, my lord, say: *bn ḫrnk* has arrived. He has defeated the troops, he has sacked the city, he has burned our grain in the threshing floors and destroyed the vineyards. Our city is perished. Know it! Know

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Annals and Foundation Documents," in Porter, *Ritual and Politics in Ancient Mesopotamia*, 104–7, 116.

[623] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 138.

[624] RIMB 2:296, S.0.1002.2, ii.4–5.

[625] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 194–95.

it!”[626] Another letter from Ugarit requests information about a possible defeat. “Regarding Targudassi and Kalbiya, I have heard that they have suffered defeat. Now if such is not the case, send me a message (to that effect).… If they have been overcome, your reply and whatever (else) you may hear there put in a letter to me.”[627] The Old Testament is unusual among the literature of the ancient Near East in consistently describing defeats (and the loss of friendly troops) at the hands of a wide variety of enemies, most significantly the fall of Samaria to the Assyrians (2 Kgs 17) and Jerusalem to the Babylonians (2 Kgs 24–25).

The Baal Cycle contains laments by El and Anat for Baal after his defeat at the hands of Mot (*KTU* 1.5 vi.11–25; vi.31–1.6 i.6–8), and a lament by Anat for Aqhat is found in Aqhat (*KTU* 1.18 iv.37–41). Laments after defeat in battle are commonly found throughout the Old Testament (but not in Kings). One of the most famous laments is that of David for his friend Jonathan (2 Sam 1:19–27). The appropriately named biblical book of Lamentations also includes laments after the conquest of Jerusalem by Babylon. The imprecatory psalms, such as the call in Ps 137 to bring violence against Babylon after its conquest of Jerusalem and their mockery of the Judean captives, were another kind of response to defeat.

5.9. Conflicted Memories

Although many battles had clear victors and losers, some battles could plausibly be considered a victory for both sides (often one side won a tactical victory while the other won a strategic victory). Since all nations desired to make themselves look as powerful as possible, both sides would naturally claim victory in these battles and provide the historian interesting glimpses into how the nations employed their public relations departments when discussing near-defeats. Since these battles involve two different armies, this section will be divided into battles rather than cultures.

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[626] Vidal, “Violence against Non-Combatant Population,” 73 (RS 19.011 = *KTU* 2.61).

[627] *COS* 3.45BB:108 (RS 4.475).

5.9.1. Sugaga

In the fourteenth century, the Kassite king Kurigalzu fought the Assyrians at Sugagu, just a short distance south of the Assyrian city of Assur. According to the pro-Assyrian Synchronistic Chronicle, the Assyrian king Enlil-narari defeated Kurigalzu and massacred his troops, dividing the land into two equal parts.[628] However, according to the Chronicle of the Kassite Kings (Chronicle P), not only did the Babylonians emerge victorious but also the Assyrian king had a different name (Adad-nirari I).[629] Since the Chronicle of the Kassite Kings tends to be more objective (it admits Babylonian defeats) and the Synchronistic Chronicle contains many errors and is stridently pro-Assyrian, most likely the battle was a Babylonian victory. This is supported by the land division recorded in the Synchronistic Chronicle, which greatly reduced Assyrian territory.[630]

5.9.2. Qadesh

The battle at Qadesh between the Egyptians and the Hittites is one of the most well-known ancient battles, but identifying the victor remains a debated subject.[631] Ramesses II claimed in his majestic reliefs and grandiose inscriptions that he had won a great victory. However, he was not able to control the land around Qadesh and shortly afterwards signed a peace treaty with the Hittites, indicating that the victory was not as impressive as he portrayed it. An exchange of letters between the Hittites and the Egyptians after the battle continued the debate as each side claimed victory (see the quotations from this letter in chapter 4).[632] It appears that while Ramesses II won the battle (a tactical victory), he was not able to gain control of the area (a strategic defeat).

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[628] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 179.

[629] Ibid., 281.

[630] A. Kirk Grayson, “Problematical Battles in Mesopotamian History,” in *Studies in Honor of Berno Landsberger on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Hans G. Güterbock and Thorkild Jacobsen, AS 16 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), 337–39.

[631] See the debate hosted by the Oriental Institute between Robert Ritner (an Egyptiologist) and Theo van den Hout (a Hittitologist) on this topic online at http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394i.

[632] Bryce, *Letters of the Great Kings of the Ancient Near East*, 89–90.

5.9.3. Der

Due to their strong desire to avoid referring to defeat, a few of the battles that the Assyrians claimed as victories might have been tactical Assyrian defeats. Sargon II claimed victory at Der over the Elamites. “Exalted prince, who came face to face with Humbanigash, king of Elam, in the outskirts of Dêr and defeated him.”[633] However, the Babylonian Chronicles record that the Elamites won (and that the Babylonians did not arrive in time to help in the battle). “The second year (of the reign) of Merodach-baladan, King Ḫumbannikaš of Elam joined battle with King Sargon of Assyria in the district of Dēr; he brought about Assyria’s withdrawal and inflicted a crushing defeat on it. Merodach-baladan, who had gone with his army to the aid of the king of Elam, did not join the battle in time and withdrew.”[634] Yet another source, an inscription from Merodach-baladan, claimed victory for the Babylonians against the Assyrians (called here Subartu). “[With] the power of the great lord, the god Marduk, and of the hero of the gods, the god Utulu, he defeated the widespread army of Subartu and shattered their weapons. He brought about their overthrow and prevented them from treading on the territory of the land of Akkad.”[635] Since Babylonian records show that the Babylonian Merodach-baladan continued to rule for many years after this battle and the Babylonian Chronicles tend to be more objective in recording both the victories and defeats of Babylon, Grayson believes that Sargon II was lying.[636] However, Melville argues that although Der might have been a tactical defeat for Sargon II, it could have been a strategic victory, since Der remained in Assyrian hands, stopping the Elamite advance, and Sargon II was able to attack the rebels in the west in the following year without worrying about attacks from the Elamites on the eastern front.[637]

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[633] *ARAB* 2:72, §137.

[634] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 194–95.

[635] RIMB 2:137, B.6.21.1, ii.16–18.

[636] Grayson, “Problematical Battles in Mesopotamian History,” 340–42.

[637] Louis D. Levine, “Sennacherib’s Southern Front: 704–689 B.C.,” *JCS* 34 (1982): 50–51; Melville, “Win, Lose, or Draw?,” 530–33; Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 61–65.

5.9.4. Halule

Another complicated Assyrian battle is Sennacherib's victory at Halule over a Babylonian and Elamite coalition in which he claimed that he filled the battlefield with corpses, killed many enemy leaders, and forced the kings of Elam and Babylon to flee.[638] However, the Babylonian Chronicle ascribed the victory to the Elamites and Babylonians. "In an unknown year, Ḫumban-nimena mustered the army of Elam and Akkad; he joined battle with Assyria at Ḫalulê and caused the withdrawal of Assyria."[639] This is supported by the continued reign of the Babylonian king Mushezib-Marduk for another two years.[640] Although the Assyrians won the battle by virtue of possessing the field of battle (a tactical victory), the Babylonians retreated with their army largely intact, forcing Sennacherib to return home (a strategic draw) to prepare for a long battle with Babylon (the siege of Babylon began the following year).[641]

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[638] RINAP 3.1:182–84, 22, v.52–vi.35.

[639] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 198–99.

[640] Grayson, "Problematical Battles in Mesopotamian History," 342.

[641] Levine, "Sennacherib's Southern Front," 49–51; Scurlock, "Neo-Assyrian Battle Tactics," 514–15; Waters, *Survey of Neo-Elamite History*, 35–36; Melville, "Win, Lose, or Draw?," 533–34.

6

Officers and Soldiers

> The army's commanding general is the body, the companies are the limbs, and the squads of five are the thumb and fingers.
>
> —The Methods of the Ssu-ma 3

We will now turn from our chronological examination of the events associated with combat to a more topical study of areas related to warfare and especially the military, beginning with areas related to the lives of officers and soldiers (the following chapters will examine martial equipment and divine warriors). The first two sections of this chapter look at the bigger picture of how armies were organized (the command structure of the armies and the size of armies), the next section examines military scribes, and the final three sections focus on the common soldiers (training and life at home, life on campaign, and problematic soldiers).

6.1. Command Structure

> He whose generals are able and not interfered with by the sovereign will be victorious.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 3.29

> Thus for five men there is a squad leader, for ten men a lieutenant, for one hundred men a company captain, for one thousand men a battalion commander, and for ten thousand men a general.
>
> —Wei Liao-Tzu 5[1]

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[1] T'ai Kung provides a similar list of leaders for chariots: leader (five chariots), captain (fifteen chariots), commander (fifty chariots), and a general (one hundred chariots) (*Six Secret Teachings* 55). In *Six Secret Teachings* 18, he also lists many different kinds of officers (along with the number of each officer in the army): chief of planning (one), planning officers (five), astrologers (three), topographers (three), strate-

> If a general commanding one thousand men or more retreats from battle, surrenders his defenses, or abandons his terrain and deserts his troops, he is termed a "state brigand." He should be executed, his family exterminated, his name expunged from the registers, his ancestral graves broken open, his bones exposed in the marketplace, and his male and female children pressed into government servitude.
>
> —Wei Liao-Tzu 13

The command structure is one of the most important parts of an army; no matter how brilliant a general might be, if his commands cannot be delivered to the common soldiers, the attack will fail. Unfortunately, the command structure of most ancient Near Eastern armies was fluid, making it difficult to provide a detailed and logical chart of the military hierarchy. This section will examine the command structure based on the limited data we have, but is at best a glimpse that often requires extensive guesswork and is only valid for a particular time and place.

6.1.1. Egyptian

The organization of the Egyptian army before the New Kingdom is difficult to determine; it is debated whether a central army even existed.[2] In the Old Kingdom the army seems to be based around militia controlled by local leaders rather than by the pharaoh. One of the earliest generals in Egyptian military history was Weni, who served under Pepy I (Sixth Dynasty). Weni was an administrative official, not a professional general, but he led an Egyptian army of militia. In this section of the autobiography, he describes his role as general and notes how local leaders

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gists (nine), supply officers (four), officers for flourishing awesomeness (four) [they picked elite troops and planned spectacular attacks], secret signal officers (three), legs and arms (four) [responsible for heavy tasks like digging moats or building fortifications], liaison officers (two), officers of authority (three) [responsible for deceptive and unusual things], ears and eyes (seven), claws and teeth (five) [raise morale and ferocity in battle], feathers and wings (four) [spread the fame of the army], roving officers (eight) [spies], officers of techniques (two) [spread slander about enemy], officers of prescriptions (three) [responsible for medicine], and accountants (two).

[2] Spalinger, "Warfare in Ancient Egypt," 230; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 323–24, 354–56; García, "War in Old Kingdom Egypt," 6; for the argument that Egypt had a standing army at the time, see Faulkner, "Egyptian Military Organization," 32–36.

led troops from their area on the campaign (foreign Nubians were also included in his army).

> His Majesty sent me at the head of this army, there being counts, there being royal sealbearers, there being sole companions of the Great Estate, there being chieftains and estate rulers of the southland and northland, companions, overseers of foreign tongue speakers, overseers of priests of the southland and northland, and overseers of the work centers at the head of the troop of the southland and northland and the estates and towns which they governed, (as well as) the Nubians of these foreign lands. I used to effectuate (military) plans for them, my office being (only) that of overseer of the officials of the palace, through the rectitude of my position, so that not one of them struck his fellow, so that not one of them took away a loaf of bread or a pair of sandals from a wayfarer, so that not one of them seized a bolt of cloth from any town, so that not one of them took away a goat from anyone. I led them from the northern island, the gateway of I(m)hotep, the plateau of Hor-neb-Maat, this office of mine being (only) that of … everything. I inspected (?) these troops of mine. Never (before) had they been inspected by any (such) servant.[3]

Another powerful Egyptian official, Pepynakht, called "seal-bearer of the king of Lower Egypt, sole companion, lector priest, overseer of foreigners," served under Pepy II of the Sixth Dynasty. In his tomb inscription he told of his military exploits in Nubia as well as his rescue of the corpse of a high-ranking official who had been killed by sand-dwellers.

> The majesty of my lord sent me to devastate the land of Wawat and Irtjet. I did what pleases my lord and killed a great number there, including the ruler's children and the commander of the excellent Nubian force. I brought a great number of them to the Residence as prisoners, I being at the head of the expedition, a large and strong force, as one who is strong of heart, and my lord was delighted with me as (he was) with every mission on which he sent me. The majesty of my lord sent me to subdue those foreign lands, and I did it in such a way that my lord was immensely pleased with me. I brought to the Residence the two subdued chiefs of these foreign lands along with gifts of live oxen and goats chosen for the benefit of the Residence, as well as their children and the two commanders of the Nubian forces which were with them. I outdid

---

[3] Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 404 ("Weni the Elder," §8).

> what had been done before by the great ones of the south/Upper Egypt because I paid close attention to carrying out the wishes of my lord.
>
> The majesty of my lord sent me to the land of the Aamu to bring back (the body of) the sole companion, controller of Nekhen, Kaaper's son the overseer of foreigners Ankhti. He had been building a reed boat there to travel to Punt when the Aamu and Sand-dwellers killed him and the armed division of the expedition which accompanied him. […*missing text probably indicated he attacked*] … those Aamu. Using the military wing of the expedition which was with me, I drove the murderers among them away.[4]

Ankhtifi was a nomarch (local leader) during the time of Egyptian weakness in the First Intermediate period who proclaimed himself a fighter in terms usually reserved for the pharaoh.

> I am the van of men, the rear of men, for my like has not been, will not be, my like was not born, will not be born. I have surpassed the deeds of my forebears, and my successors will not reach me in anything I have done for the next million years. For when this troop of Hefat is at rest, this land stands at rest. But when it slams its tail like a crocodile, this whole land, south and north, stands trembling. When I grasp the oars, I find the herds shut in, the bolts bolted. When I travel to the nome of Thinis against one who forgot himself, I find it with its watchmen on the walls. When I hasten to the combat, "Woe," says he, the wretch. I am the champion who has no peer![5]

In the Middle Kingdom private armies were still present, but a central standing army also appears to have come into existence and various ranks become more standardized, though it is still difficult to create a clear picture of the Egyptian military.[6] An early Middle Kingdom letter from an Egyptian general Nehesu to his father-in-law Kay provides a glimpse into the privilege and difficulties of officers on campaign. The general had sent food home to his family, but they had not received it and he suspects the stepmother of his wife of directing the food elsewhere.

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[4] Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 334–35; also *ARE* 1.163; Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 16.

[5] Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Autobiographies*, 26.

[6] Faulkner, "Egyptian Military Organization," 36–41; Spalinger, "Warfare in Ancient Egypt," 231–32; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 418–22.

> A message from the General Nehesu to the […] of […], Kay: 'How are you, how are you? Are you alive, prosperous and healthy? Your state is [like the living, a million] tim[es]! May Montu, Lord of Thebes, assist you, and all the gods—may they make for you a million years of life, prosperity and health, and […], as I desire. What about the message for me from Senet, saying, "No food is brought to me"? Lo[ok, I sent … sacks of grain] to my household, and ten sacks to you. Have Kay's daughter […]usenet and Kay's son Nefersesh brought them from the cargo-ship? [If they have not] you shall bring them (yourselves). Another thing: look, (it's) a delivery in full: so what about [letting] yourself be turned against your own daughter? What you've done will be to kill her, by […]'s not giving that grain to [my] household! Now, look, I know the character of a stepmother: Are you following your wife's wishes in killing my household? Can I be confident that I've given my household provisions when I'm sent to, about there being no provisions? Cause the cargo-ship to return, once it has reached me.'[7]

Evidence of the military structure becomes much more abundant in the New Kingdom.[8] The king often led the troops on campaign, while a complicated hierarchy of military officers served under the pharaoh. Several texts list a series of these officers; an example comes from P.BM EA 10274: commander of a host, standard-bearer, adjutant, platoon-leader, scribe, and infantryman.[9] Arguing that since military ranks appear in relatively the same order throughout these different texts, Schulman dedicated his book on the topic to composing an overall chart for the relative positions of the ranks and titles.[10] However, Yoyotte and López showed several serious flaws in his argumentation, such as confusion in the terms "rank" and "title" and ignoring differences in genre and time.[11] As with many other areas in this book, it is more profitable to study particular time periods.[12]

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[7] Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt*, 107–8 (EA 10549); also James, *Ḥeḳanakhte Papers*, 89–92.

[8] Faulkner, "Egyptian Military Organization," 41–47; Schulman, *Military Rank*; Yoyotte and López, "Organisation de l'armée"; Ahmed Kadry, *Officers and Officials in the New Kingdom*, Studia Aegyptiaca 8 (Budapest: Készült az ELTE Sokszorosítóüzemében, 1982); Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt."

[9] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 8.

[10] Ibid., 8–9, 81–86; for another example of such an organizational chart, see Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 91.

[11] Yoyotte and López, "Organisation de l'armée."

[12] For examples of study of command structure during specific time periods,

The military officers were not a distinctly separate branch from the civil officials, as they often moved seamlessly between the two realms.[13] This movement is illustrated by the life of Amenemone; coming from a priestly family, Amenemone left behind many monuments. This text from Thebes describes his rise in the ranks under Ramesses II from a charioteer to a commander of the army, a foreign envoy, an overseer of building projects, and an overseer of a temple (elsewhere he also calls himself a chief of the Madjai).[14]

> Greatly favored of the Perfect God,
> a confidant, excellent for his lord,
> commander of the large army,
> Amenemone, true of voice,
> son of the dignitary, high priest of Amun,
> Wenennefer, true of voice;
>
> he says to this effect: I was a follower of His Person, when he was a child.
> He appointed me charioteer and overseer of horses, when he was lord (king).
> My lord favored me for my excellence,
> and he appointed me commander of his army.
>
> My lord favored me for my abilities,
> and he sent me as a royal messenger to all foreign lands;
> I reported to him concerning the lands in their every aspect.
> He favored me again for my excellence
> and he appointed me overseer of works in all his monuments.
>
> He favored me again for my effectiveness
> and he appointed me overseer of works
> in his temple of millions of years
> of the Dual King, Usermaatre Setepenre (Ramesses II), in the domain of Amun.

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see William J. Murnane, "The Organization of Government under Amenhotep III," in O'Connor, *Amenhotep III*, 196–200; Betsy M. Bryan, *The Reign of Thutmose IV* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 279–93; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 60–70.

13. Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 70–78, 269–70; this is also a frequent theme in Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*; for another example, see the reference to Mai below.

14. For more on him, see Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 148–52.

> I was one unique, excellent,
> effective for his lord;
> he appointed me *ka*-priest for his statue.
> He made my property in all respects,
> […]
> Commander of the large army,
> Amenemone, true of voice,
> born of the great one of the harem of Amun-Re in Karnak,
> Ese, true of voice.[15]

The highest-ranking officer seems to be the general (*mr mšʿ wr*), a position sometimes occupied by the crown prince and one who could give orders to other high ranking officers.[16] One of the more famous generals is Horemheb, who eventually became pharaoh himself. Tutankhamen had appointed him to be the "hereditary prince," but when the pharaoh died at a young age, the powerful Ay took the position of pharaoh for himself. After the aged Ay died several years later, Horemheb was able to seize power, perhaps with the help of the army.[17] Other high-ranking officers were adjutants (*jdnw*), sometimes translated field marshals.[18] The general trend was that a *jdnw* could become a general, but promotions were not consistent.[19] The officer Amenemhab served under Thutmose III and describes his frequent involvement in combat, leading to his frequent capture of prisoners and spoil and further rewards from the pharaoh (he even claims to have rescued the pharaoh in battle). He ended his career under Amenhotep II as a *jdnw*. The following are a few selections from his biography.[20]

> The officer, Amenemhab; he says:
>
> "I was the very faithful one of the sovereign, L. P. H., the wise-hearted of the King of Upper Egypt, the excellent-hearted of the King of

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[15] Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 190–91; also *RITA* 3.143:195.

[16] For more on the military roles occupied by princes in the New Kingdom, see Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 79–91; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 44; for a discussion of the various forms of the title and the men who served as generals in the New Kingdom, see Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 3–12, 41–66.

[17] Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 44–51.

[18] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 34–35; Yoyotte and López, "Organisation de l'armée," 7; Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 31–34.

[19] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 73.

[20] For more on Amenemheb, see Der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II*, 162–64.

> Lower Egypt. I followed my lord on his expeditions in the northern and southern country. He desired that I should be the companion of his feet, while he was upon the battlefield of his victories, while his valor fortified the heart."
>
> "I fought hand to hand in the land of Negeb. I brought off three men, Asiatics, as living prisoners." …
>
> "Again I beheld his bravery, while I was among his followers. [He] captured [the city of] Kadesh; I was not absent from the place where he was; I brought off two men, lrods, as [living prisoners; I set them] before the king, the Lord of the Two Lands, Thutmose (III), living forever. He gave to me gold because of bravery, before the whole people …; list thereof: of the finest gold: a lion; 2 necklaces, 2 flies, 4 arm rings." …
>
> "Again [I beheld] another excellent deed which the Lord of the Two Lands did in Niy. He hunted 120 elephants, for the sake of their tusks and ⌜—⌝. I engaged the largest which was among them, which fought against his majesty; I cut off his hand while he was alive [before] his majesty, while I stood in the water between two rocks. Then my lord rewarded me with gold; [he] gave … and 3 changes of clothes."
>
> "The prince of Kadesh sent forth a mare before [the army]; in order to … ⌜them,⌝ she entered among the army. I pursued after her on foot, with my sword, and I ripped open her belly; I cut off her tail, I set it before the king; while there was thanksgiving to god for it! He gave (me) joy, it filled my body, (⌜with⌝) rejoicing, he endued my limbs."[21]

Another rank under the general was the commander of a host (*ḥry pḏt*), who also often ruled over garrisons or fortresses.[22] A commander of the host under Akhenaten, Mai, was also responsible for a temple and left behind a hymn to Aten.[23] In at least one case, promotion to this rank was by the pharaoh's direct appointment. Papyrus Anastasi V includes a letter in which a military officer wrote to another officer to congratulate him on his promotion to commander of host.

> Further, I have received the letter which you wrote to say: "Pharaoh (l.p.h.), my good lord (l.p.h.), has carried out for me his good designs. Pharaoh (l.p.h.) has put me to be captain of troops of the well"—thus

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[21] *ARE* 2:230–33.

[22] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 53–56.

[23] Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in* Egypt, 143–47; *ARE* 2:411–13; for a discussion of his military and religious role, see Gnirs, *Militär und Gesellschaft*, 159–62.

> you wrote to me. It is a benefit of Prēʿ your being (now) in the post of your father. Felicitations, felicitations! Your letter has reached me, and I rejoice exceedingly. May Prēʿ-Ḥarakhti grant you to enjoy a long span of life in the post of your father![24]

Another promotion is recorded in the tomb biography of Nebamun from standard-bearer to commander of the Medjai.

> My majesty commands the receiving of a goodly old age in the favour of the king, to take care of the standard-bearer Nebamun of the royal ship Mry-[jmn.] He has attained old age while he followed Pharaoh, l.p.h., in steadfastness. He is better today than yesterday in doing what is placed in his charge. He has not been informed against. I have not found any fault although a slander was informed on, on his behalf. Then my majesty has commanded to confer upon him the office (?) as commander of the Medjai on the West of Thebes.[25]

Many military leaders in Egypt prepared tombs for themselves (examples from the time of Ramesses II include Sety, Hatiay, Urhiya, Ramesses-Sonb, and Montuemtawy), reflecting their elevated status.[26] Many officers were also landowners. The document P.Wilbour from the time of Ramesses V included lists of land ownership in Middle Egypt; data from it suggests that soldiers held 17 percent of the land, and that the soldiers were concentrated in specific areas.[27] High-ranking officials gained sufficient power that they could cause problems for the pharaoh. Some members of the harem conspiracy against Ramesses III were in the military, including a general (Pei-is) and a troop commander (Binemwaset).[28] Several pharaohs came from a military background, such as Horemheb, who had served as an officer under Tutankhamen and Ay.

One of the most detailed inscriptions of a military officer is from Ahmose, who served under several different pharaohs. Growing up in

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[24] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 239; also Schulman, *Military Rank*, 102.

[25] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 93, no. 39; for more on Nebamun, see Liszka, "'We Have Come to Serve Pharaoh,'" 331–38; for a discussion of the relief accompanying the inscription, see Gaballa, *Narrative in Egyptian Art*, 63–64.

[26] *RITA* 3.131.XI.1–5:165–69; other military officials from the time of Ramesses II who left inscriptions include lieutenants of chariotry, charioteers, stablemasters, and standard-bearers; see *RITA* 3.133–135.XI.11–32:172–83.

[27] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 264–65.

[28] "The Harim Conspiracy I: Turin Judicial Papyrus," *RITA* 5.148:300.

Nekheb, his father was a soldier. He started his career (before he was married) as a soldier on the ship *The Wild Bull* during the reign of Ahmose I, the first pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty. From there, his career took off quickly.

> Now when I had established a household, I was taken to the ship *Northern* because I was brave. I followed the sovereign on foot when he rode about on his chariot. When the town of Avaris was besieged, I fought bravely on foot in his majesty's presence. Thereupon I was appointed to the ship *Rising in Memphis*. Then there was fighting on the water in *Pjedku* of Avaris. I made a seizure and carried off a hand. When it was reported to the royal herald the gold of valor was given to me.[29]

Following the battle at Avaris, he continued to capture living captives and acquire hands, receiving more gold and captives as a reward after battles in Sharuhen (in Canaan) and Nubia. Later, during the reign of Amenhotep I, he conveyed the pharaoh to Nubia and attracted the personal attention of the king. "Now I was in the van of our troops and I fought really well. His majesty saw my valor. I carried off two hands and presented them to his majesty." After this battle he was made a "Warrior of the Ruler." When he brought Thutmose I to battle in the south, he was once again promoted for valiance in battle and bad weather and appointed a crew commander. In the final battle recorded, Ahmose was even able to capture a living prisoner along with his horse and chariot. His promotions and wealth allowed his family to achieve high rank; his grandson became a tutor of the king's sons as well as the mayor of Nekheb and Iunyt.

One of the most well-known ranks lower in the hierarchy was the standard-bearer (*ṯꜣj sryt*), who commanded a company. An inscription on a bronze vase from Amarna during the time of Akhenaten provides evidence of this connection: "Made (i.e., dedicated) by the standard-bearer of the company called 'Aten is Caused to be Satisfied,' Ramose."[30] Schulman speculates that if the company was at full strength, it contained 3 senior officers (a standard-bearer, an adjutant of the company, and a scribe of the company), 30 junior officers (5 platoon-leaders and 25 squad leaders), and 220 enlisted men, for a total of 253 men.[31] However, other scholars have more plausibly argued that the company size was 200 men.[32] Papyrus Turin B refers to “three companies of soldiers, with 600 men in them, 200 (to) each.”[33] The companies could consist of specific types of men, such as foreign troops or archers.[34] On a smaller scale, a platoon leader (ʿꜣ [*n*]) led a unit of 50 men.[35] Although the evidence is very slim, a squad leader of 10 men might be parallel to modern noncommissioned officers.[36] One officer called the “speaker of the army” was perhaps responsible for such functions as passing orders to the soldiers and proclaiming the victories after the battle.[37]

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[29] *AEL* 2:12–14; the Ahmose text can be found in many other places: *COS* 2.1:5–7; *ANET*, 233–34; *ARE* 2:6–9, 17–18, 33–35, 51, 143–44.

[30] Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, 183.

6.1.2. Hittite

As expected, the Hittite king was the supreme leader of the army and often led the army on its campaigns.[38] Under the king, the second level of military official included such leaders as the crown prince, vassal kings, the Chief of the Royal Bodyguards, Chief of the Wine-Stewards, and Chief of the Cupbearers (no specific officer always led the troops when the king did not go on the campaign). For example, in one campaign Mursili II sent Nuwanza, Chief of the Wine, to lead the troops against an enemy threatening Kannuwara.[39] Tudhaliya I ordered his men to obey other leaders as if they were obeying him: “But when an enemy that retains hostility somehow persists, but I, My Majesty, come back in order [to venerate my] gods, or His Majesty goes wherever His Majesty pleases, and if I place some [(prince)] or great lord in command of the army, then just like the command of My Majesty [you must] ca[rry out] his (command) likew<(ise)>, [and] the whole army must obey [hi]m."[40] However, it was apparently not always clear how much authority each officer possessed. In one letter, the Commander of the Chariot-warriors (perhaps Hulla?) ordered Kassu (called the Commander of the Military Heralds) to interact with the envoys of the Kaska himself rather than waiting for Hulla to come himself.[41]

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[31] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 30.

[32] Faulkner, “Egyptian Military Organization,” 45; Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 156.

[33] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 469.

[34] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 29.

[35] Ibid., 33.

[36] Ibid., 28.

[37] Ibid., 38.

[38] The most comprehensive work on the organization of the Hittite army has been done by Richard Beal; see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*; Beal, “Hittite Military Organization.”

[39] *COS* 2.16:89 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

Like the king, apparently even high-ranking generals operated close to combat areas. A Middle Hittite letter describes the death of a high-ranking official (the Gold Chariot-Warrior) after the enemy had set a trap for a group of chariots. "Concerning what you wrote about the enemy, how the enemy set a trap for thirty teams of chariotry (from/at?) Panāta, and that the Gold Chariot-Warrior sought to make a circuit of the *perimeter*, but the enemy killed him from behind—I have heard it (all)."[42]

One letter recorded that the Commander of the Chariot-warriors (perhaps Hulla?) promoted an officer. "Thus speaks the Commander of the Chariot-warriors: Say to Kaššū, my brother: In view of this performance of yours: Herewith the squadron is henceforth yours alone. You are herewith named to another military unit. So drive here as quickly as you can (to receive the command from me). Get a move on!"[43] It was the king's responsibility to mediate between officers; one example is the king's rebuke of Kassu for levying troops from EN-tarawa's area.[44]

The military structure contained many other ranks (Beal organizes the ranks into at least six levels of leaders between the king and the ordinary soldier), though the details of how all these ranks relate to each other is often obscure.[45] One common middle-ranking official was the *UGULA LĪM*, who frequently led regional contingents and either guarded cities or acted as field officers.[46] Further down the chain the *^{LÚ}DUGUD* was a low-ranking official who led groups of men between the sizes of three and forty-three men; most likely there were several ranks of *^{LÚ}DUGUD*.[47]

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[40] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 148–49 (*CTH* 259).

[41] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 227–28 (*HKM* 71; *CTH* 190).

[42] Ibid., 142 (*HKM* 26; *CTH* 186).

[43] Ibid., 226 (*HKM* 70; *CTH* 190).

[44] Ibid., 103 (*HKM* 5; *CTH* 186); for discussion, see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 316.

[45] For a chart showing the relative ranking of these officers, see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 527.

[46] Ibid., 473–81.

[47] Beal suggests that these levels would correspond approximately to the ranks

6.1.3. Early Mesopotamian

The great diversity of armies in early Mesopotamia necessitates taking a closer look at a few specific command structures rather than attempting to create a generalized pattern. Lafont sees three layers of officers under the king at Ur III: generals (*šagina*), captains (*nubanda*$_3$), and lieutenants (*ugula*). The lieutenants were further divided into smaller groups, such as commanders of sixty and commanders of ten. One text lists all three ranks: "3 oxen, 255 sheep on the 21st day, (and) 90 sheep, šugid-delivery to the kitchen, for the generals, the captains, and the 'commanders-of-sixty', who have returned from campaign" (presumably the food was for the entire army, not just the officers).[48] These divisions are also supported from a reference in the Epic of Gilgamesh and might be applicable to earlier Sargonic times as well.[49] The size of the various units was flexible; a *nubanda* seems to have commanded about two hundred men.[50]

The Mari letters contain many references to officers, but it is difficult to determine a strict line of command. A letter from Samadahum to Yasmah-Adad contains two lists: "the section-chiefs (*rab pirsim*), the lieutenants (*laputtûm*), the (10 men) squad-leaders (*wakil 10 awīlī*), and the soldiers (*rēdûm*) … a general (*rab amurrim*), an army-scribe (*ṭupšar amurrîm*), a section-chief (*rab pirsim*), or a lieutenant (*laputtûm*)." If these are consistent, then a ranking might be general, army-scribe, section-chief, lieutenant, and squad-leader.[51] Based on texts detailing how much each rank was paid, Hamblin estimates the order slightly differently: general (*rab Amurrim*), colonel (*šāpirū ṣābim*), captain (*rab pirsim*), lieutenant (*laputtūm*), sergeant or standard-bearer (*mubabbilum*), and corporal or overseer of ten (*wakil*).[52]

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from captain down to sergeant or corporal in a modern army; for more on the ^{LÚ}*DU-GUD*, see ibid., 488–504.

[48] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 14.

[49] Benjamin R. Foster, "Management and Administration in the Sargonic Period," in *Akkad: The First World Empire; Structure, Ideology, Traditions*, ed. Mario Liverani, HANE/S 5 (Padova: Sargon, 1993), 26–27; Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 97; Foster, *The Age of Agade: Inventing Empire in Ancient Mesopotamia* (London: Routledge, 2016), 168.

[50] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 97.

[51] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 198 (ARM 2.13 = LAPO 17.457 = Sasson 1.3.a.ii.1).

[52] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 195–97; for a broader discussion that includes other ranks, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 11–17.

Based on a variety of texts providing specific numbers, generals usually led units of two or three thousand men.[53] A letter by Ibal-pi-El to Zimri-Lim helps to clarify the organizational structure at lower levels, saying that normally for a thousand men ten *rab pirsim* would be needed. However, Bahdi-Adad has assigned twelve, so Ibal-pi-El removed two of them. He also noted that Bahdi-Adad had assigned twenty-four *lapputtûm*, which Ibal-pi-El remarks would have been appropriate for an army one thousand four hundred. Instead of twenty-four, he assigns twenty *lapputtûm* to lead the army. In sum, according to this text a *rab pirsim* would have been over one hundred men and a *lapputtûm* over fifty men. Since fifty standard bearers are also mentioned, they would have been over twenty men.[54]

As elsewhere, powerful officers could cause problems for the king in early Mesopotamia.[55] In a treaty between Ebla and Abarsal (no kings are named) from about 2300, various stipulations are included concerning problematic officers.

> If one or other out of (say) 10 officers offers (such) curses, (then) a fine of 50 sheep shall be paid.
>
> If (it is) [someone] from [the commanders] [of a conquered fort], (then his) [property], he must hand over, (even) a (battering)-ram and a wagon.
>
> (Whenever) the commander of a fort delays messengers (for) delivery of [his goods], to the trustee of the battering-ram (and) to the trustee of the wagon, oxen and sheep shall be given and handed over.[56]

A series of letters between Shulgi the king of Ur and two of his officers illustrates the kinds of problems that the king had to manage when pacifying military officers. The interchange began with a letter from the military officer Abaindasa in which he requested grace from Shulgi for a reason that is not recorded. "I am a widow's son; I have no one to show concern for me. Ah but me—when will Šulgi, my king, restore me to my position? May my king show his concern for me and restore me to my prosperous position!”[57] Shulgi responded by rebuking Aradmu, Abaindasa’s superior, for removing him from service.

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[53] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 12.

[54] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 508; Fleming, *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors*, 72 (A.486+ = LAPO 17.579 = Sasson 2.1.c.ii.2).

[55] On the topic at Mari, see Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 409–16.

[56] *TLC* 1:21, §§F.23, F.24, and F.26; for historical background, see *TLC* 2:6.

> Speak to Aradmu, saying (the words) of Šulgi, your king: “When Abaindasa, captain of the armed forces, sent that letter (to me/you) … important … so that he could confirm the punishment that you imposed on him. Why did you remove him from that regiment and throw him in prison? Having reduced the punishment that you had imposed by your own volition, now that the enemy is coming against you, reinstate him into that regiment!”[58]

After being rebuked by the king, Aradmu defended himself in a letter, telling why he removed Abaindasa from leadership.

> (Concerning the matter of) Abaindasa, captain of the royal armed forces, that my king sent me (a message) about; my king must be informed about the matter.
>
> When I focused my attention on Zimudar, I was in the process of mustering troops for my king’s military service, but when Abaindasa inspected those troops, 2,000 of those men were missing. He had not gone to …, nor had he returned. He had abandoned the fortress, o my king, and then (re)captured (it)! That crime was a very serious crime against my king!… Whatever you, my king order me to do, (I will do)! Now my king is informed (about all of this)![59]

Finally, another letter from Aradmu to the king of Ur referred to Abaindasa, this time stating that he had been reinstated by the king, but was still not following orders.

> Abaindasa, the captain of the royal armed forces, who had been returned to the ranks by my king, abandoned the task (assigned by) my king and applied himself to work on building the fortifications. My king, because the orders were not being … Šulgi-x dispatched? a messenger, … but because he rebelled … but could not send my messenger.… He destroyed/broke … and had to bear punishment and was ousted from that troop. That crime was a very serious crime against my

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[57] Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur*, 306.

[58] Ibid., 326–27; for more on the Abaindasa affair, see ibid., 75–78.

[59] Ibid., 330.

> king! After he was entrusted to a second man (that man) carried out the punishment.[60]

At Mari, a letter from Sharrum-Sululi reported to Zimri-Lim the discord between Ibal-pi-El and Zimri-Adad and its effects on the troops. Ibal-pi-El was accused of scolding the division commanders concerning their practice of replacing reliable men; the division commanders in turn complained to Zimri-Adad (ARM 26.380). In a Babylonian oracle question an unnamed official asked Shamash if the troops or a commander would rebel against their lord. The text dates from the first millennium, but it might have been originally composed in the second millennium.

> Samas, great lord, whom I am asking, answer me with a reliable "Yes!" Will the troops] of so-and-so be constantly frowning and troublesome, and will they, [either] by their own counsel, or by the counsel of their advisers … […] will they prevail and stand with so-and-so and … […]? Will they either in the day time or by night, either in the city or [in the country], make an attacking evil raid upon the … of their lord, seize [him], kill him or incarcerate him in a prison? Your great divinity [knows].[61]

Another Babylonian oracle questions Shamash and Adad about whether a person should become a charioteer.

> Samas, lord of the judgment, Adad, lord of the inspection, Samas, great lord whom I am asking, answer me with a reliable "Yes." So-and-so, son of so-and-so, your slave … has resolved in the matter of holding the reins, desires … is seeking for it. Should he get him up on the chariot with him and should he [put in his hands] his reins? Will he be safe [with] those reins, will he hold [them] with so-and-so, his master? Will his master be content with him, will he beam and rejoice?[62]

The Laws of Hammurabi indicate that the common soldiers should be protected against the avarice of officers. "If either a captain or a sergeant should take a soldier's household furnishings, oppress a soldier, hire out a soldier, deliver a soldier into the power of an influential person in a law case, or take a gift that the king gave to a soldier, that captain or sergeant shall be killed."[63]

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[60] Ibid., 335.

[61] Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 127.

[62] Ibid., 111.

6.1.4. Assyrian

The Assyrian army was a diverse mixture of many different groups that existed separately, making it virtually impossible to determine a standardized military hierarchy.[64] Some parts of this scheme are very secure: the king is clearly at the top, with the field marshals (*turtan*) under him; at the other end of the hierarchy the commanders of fifty and ten are most likely self-explanatory titles. However, the high- and medium-ranking officials lack consistency; the command structure varied across different regions and time periods.[65] Beginning with reforms instituted by Sennacherib, the crown prince (and perhaps other members of the royal family) took direct control of portions of the royal army.[66] Several high-ranking officials appear throughout the Assyrian texts, most of whom rule a province and lead troops. One text (SAA 1.34) lists tribute that was given to different officers, perhaps showing some measure of relative rank.[67] Although the palace received the majority of the plunder, the *turtan* received the most out of the military officials listed (20 kg silver), while the chief eunuch received 4 kg silver and a chariot driver received 1 kg silver.

A *turtan* appears to have been an overall commander, especially when the king was not present.[68] At the time of Sargon II the office was divided into the right (southern) and left (northern) *turtan*; the left turtan commanded at minimum "150 chariots, 1,500 cavalry men, 20,000 bowmen, and 10,000 shield-bearers and lancers." The left *turtan* was based at Kummuhi while the right *turtan* was based in Til-Barsip.[69] Shalmaneser III described a military campaign headed by his *turtan* Daiian-Assur when the king was residing in Calah. The campaign included all the standard aspects of a royal campaign, including crossing the river at flood stage, the presence of the radiance of Assur, hanging the defeated on stakes, and the construction of a royal statue.[70] The Old Testament records that a *turtan* was present with Sennacherib's troops when they attacked Jerusalem (along with a *rab ša-rēši* and a *rab šaqê*) (2 Kgs 18:17). Urartu, the neighboring country to the north (and Assyria's frequent enemy), also employed at least one *turtan* in their army as he was captured in a battle with the Cimmerians (SAA 1.31).

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[63] Roth, *Law Collections*, 87.

[64] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 145; for studies of the Assyrian command structure, see ibid., 113–63.

[65] One example of an attempt at such an organizational chart comes from Dawson. The king and the field marshals (*turtan*) are at the top; under their control were three sections of the army: foreign contingents (directed by their own kings), the royal guard, and the royal army (*ṣab šarri*). The royal army would have been directed in descending order by the provincial governors, generals, cohort commanders, commanders of fifty, and commanders of ten; see Dawson, *First Armies*, 186.

[66] Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 41; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 175–76.

[67] For a chart listing the various items, see Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 144–45.

[68] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 146–47; Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 107–25, 153; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 218–21.

The *turtan* Bel-luballit served under Shalmaneser III and left a stela at Assur.[71] During the reign of Adad-narari III the *turtan* Shamshi-ilu left a much lengthier inscription of his deeds on two stone lions at Til-Barsip (later called Kar-Shalmaneser, modern Tell Ahmar). After describing the rebellion of Argishtu, the king of Urartu, he tells of his victory over the rebels in terms usually reserved for the Assyrian king.

> By the command of the father, Aššur, the great lord, and the lofty mother of Ešarra, foremost among the gods, the goddess Ninlil; Šamšī-ilu, the field marshal [*turtan*], the great herald, [the administrator of] temples, chief of the extensive army, put a strong force of soldiers into those mountains. With the great roar of drums (and) weapons at the ready which reverberate terrifyingly, he rushed forth like a terrible storm. He let fly the stormy steeds, harnessed to his chariot, against him (Argištu) like the Anzu-bird and defeated him.[72]

The *rab ša-rēši* (chief eunuch) seems to have been in charge of the standing army, but usually under the direction of the *turtan*, though the position rises in importance during the reign of Sargon II. However, he does not seem to have been a ruler of a province. Many texts describe him leading an army against the enemy, especially rebellious vassals.[73] Due to the importance of the position, Esarhaddon asked the Sun God not only about his own plans, but also about the plans of his officers, such as the chief eunuch Sha-Nabu-shu (SAA 4.63). A chief eunuch is attested in the Old Testament as being present at Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem (2 Kgs 18:17).

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[69] Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 151, 165.

[70] RIMA 3:69, A.0.102.14, 146–156.

[71] Ibid., 3:178, A.0.102.2002.

[72] Ibid., 3:232–33, A.0.104.2010, 13–17; also *COS* 2.115A:278.

[73] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 155–56; Mattila,

The *nâgir ekalli* (palace herald) likewise appears to have had a high military role, though the references to the military role of the position are mostly limited to the time of Sargon II.[74] Due to his geographical location, Mattila suggests that he could have been the commander of the northern or northeastern army.[75] The *abarakku* (steward) played a military role as well. Malbran-Labat says that before Sargonic times it was a high-ranking title, but later came be a lower position in the ranks.[76]

The *rab šaqê* (chief cupbearer) appears to have been in charge of a large border province near Urartu and commanded his own army group. In contrast to the palace herald, he was more active in military matters outside his land and is also known from biblical sources (2 Kgs 18:17).[77] Some of the chief cupbearers apparently took advantage of their position as the astrologer Balasi complained to the king about one of them (SAA 10.58).

> I have servants in the land of the Chief Cupbearer, and I have fields and orchards (there). (But) the servants of the Chief Cupbearer, coveting my orchards, have snatched them and chased my people away. Fr[om the mo] ment they chased them, they (=my people) [go]t into a panic and disappeared. May [the gods] not forsake me! [May the ki]ng [feel] pity (for his servant)! May a guard be appointed [for] me, let him do me justice![78]

Every king faced the potential of powerful military officers usurping control. In this query to the Sun God, Esarhaddon asks whether any rebellion would arise from his officials (SAA 4.139).

King's Magnates, 61–76, 153, 163–64; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 222–27.

[74] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 147–49; Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 29–43, 155; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 216.

[75] Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 161–63.

[76] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 152–55.

[77] Ibid., 150–51; Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 45–60, 155, 163; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 217–18.

[78] Another letter refers to appeals against officers that were taken directly to the king; see J. N. Postgate, "*Princeps Iudex* in Assyria," *RA* 74 (1980): 180–82.

> [From this day], the 6th day of this month, the month Ad[ar (XII), to the 5th day of the month Sivan (III) of the coming year], [for 90 day] s and nights, my stipulated term—[within this stipulated term], [will (any of) the] eunuchs and the bearded (officials), [the king's]entourage, [or senior members of the royal line, or] junior members of the royal line, or any relative of the king [whosoever], [or the prefect]s, or the recruitment officers and te[am] comma[nders, or the royal bo]dyguard, or (his) personal guard, or the king's chariotmen, [or the keepers of the inner gates], [or the ke]epers of the outer gates, or the attendants of the mulestables, or the la[ckeys], [or the] cooks, confectioners (and) bakers,[the entire body of] craftsmen, [or the] Itu'eans, the Elamites, the mounted bowmen, [the Hittites and the Gurreans, o]r the Akkadians, Arameans, or Cimme[rians, o]r the Egyptians, or the Nubians, or the Qed[arites], or their brothers, or their sons, or [their nephews], or their friends, or[their] guests, [or their] accom[plices], be they eunuchs or bearded(officials), or [any] enemy [at all], whether by day or by night, or in the cit[y or in the country], whether while (he is) sitting on the royal throne, or in a chariot, or [in a rickshaw], or while walking, whether while going out or co[ming in], or while (he is) sitting on the …, be it men [who are on a military assignment], or men who enter into and leave from tax-collection, or while he is eating o[r drinking], or girding or ungirding himself, or while enga[ged in washing himself], whether through deceit or guile or an[y … whatsoever], make an uprising and rebellion against Esarhaddon, king of Assyria? [Will they act with evil intent against him]?

Nabu-shumu-lishir, an officer who appears to have lost a key city to the rebels (led by Assurbanipal's brother Shamash-shum-ukin), pled for favor with Assurbanipal after his military failure (SAA 18.146). "After Birati was destroyed and its gods were carried off, I was a dead man, but when I saw the gold signet ring of the king, my lord, I came to life. But now, when I sent my [m]essenger to greet the king, my lord, I did not see the signet ring of the king, my lord, and I stopped living. I am a dead man. The king, my lord, must not abandon me!"

At some levels of command, the officers were close enough to battle to be injured. In a letter to Tiglath-pileser III or Sargon II, the officer Mushezib-ilu describes his wound he received in battle (SAA 19.119 = ND 2387). "The Gamuleans were in Arrapha on the 3rd day. I was wounded in the military campaign and I am very ill. It is not possible for me to co[me] to the king, my lord. At the moment I am laid up in the town Ša-Turmiš on the Za[b] river." Unfortunately, it is unknown which rank he occupied.

The letters contain a few references to a commander of a thousand (*rab 1 lim*), such as in SAA 17.152, but little detail about their role or relationship to other officers is discernable.[79] The most important middle-level officials were the cohort commanders (*rab kiṣir*).[80] They seem to serve under the officials described earlier, as indicated by references like "the cohort commander of the chief eunuch" (SAA 1.45). A letter to Esarhaddon (SAA 16.115) notes that a cohort commander was appointed by the king, while cohorts could be formed by the king or by governors.[81] The cohort (*kiṣru*) was a fundamental unit in the Assyrian system, but it is unknown how many men made up a cohort or how a cohort commander would relate to a *rab hanšu* (see below).[82]

Many cohort commanders appear in Assyrian records.[83] Cohort commanders fought close enough to the front lines that they could die in action (as recorded in SAA 15.35). Cohort commanders could also serve as messengers.[84] Bel-ushezib wrote to the king that an enemy, Nergal-ashared, was bringing cohort commanders before him and having them perform oaths of loyalty (SAA 10.113). The cohort commanders appear to have occupied a relatively high standing, as illustrated by the wealth of some of the cohort commanders.[85] Mannu-ki-Arbail, a cohort commander under Esarhaddon, left behind many receipts of his purchases. This example derives from the purchase of a vineyard: "A planted vineyard in the town of Urulli, adjoining a threshing floor, a grove, the road which goes to Kipšuna, one which leads to the ferry, and the garden of Adad-ibni—Mannu-ki-Arbail, the cohort commander, has contracted and bought it from Idraya for 31 shekels of silver."[86] Assur-etel-ilani, one of the last kings of the Assyrian Empire, exempted a cohort commander from paying taxes (SAA 12.36).

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[79] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 122; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 180.

[80] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 126–30; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 157–80.

[81] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 158.

[82] Postgate, "Assyrian Army in Zamua," 107; J. N. Postgate, "The Invisible Hierarchy: Assyrian Military and Civilian Administration in the 8th and 7th Centuries BC," in *Land of Assur*, 344–45.

[83] Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 160.

[84] Ibid., 161–62.

[85] For more on the social status and wealth of the cohort commanders, see ibid., 162–70.

The cohort commanders also caused problems, however. Taklak-Bel, the governor of Babylon, responded to the accusation of Sargon II concerning a cohort commander who stole sheep and refused to work, even when he was no longer required to return the sheep (SAA 1.236; further information on this matter is found in SAA 1.235). One document includes the debt of a military officer: the deputy of the cohort commander Dari-sharru owed 200 sheep (SAA 7.30). Bel-duri, the governor of Damascus, told Sargon II about a loan he made to an officer and how it is being repaid (SAA 1.171). "When there was an [ep]idemic here, Ilu-biʾdi a cohort [commander of the … under] my jurisdiction killed a horse. I made up for the horse in his stead and he promised: 'I'll give you the money.' Now this Ilu-biʾdi has died; his wife, as the king knows, has married a young boy and that person has been serving under me as a cook." According to an official named Bel-iqisha, another cohort commander became a drunkard and fought with other officers (SAA 16.115). "These three men are drunkards. When they are drunk, none of them can turn his iron sword away from his colleague."

A list (perhaps from the time of Esarhaddon) includes officers (such as several chariot drivers, a cohort commander, a recruitment officer, a horse trainer of open chariotry, a cohort commander of the crown prince, a chief of the scouts) among those granted a place to stay, perhaps for a large festival in Nineveh (SAA 7.9).[87] Although it is difficult to understand, after a list of food an account lists several people (including military officers), who were either to attend a feast or provide the feast (SAA 7.149).

The lowest levels of command were the commanders of fifty (*rab hanšu*) and ten (*rab eširte*).[88] Not much is known about these ranks beyond that they headed smaller groups of the Assyrian army, though the titles also appear in civil contexts.[89] Based on the consistent appearance of archer pairs (in which one man holds a shield while the other employs the bow), it is possible that the commander of ten refers to the officer who directed archer pairs (either five or ten pairs). The commander of fifty would then lead five of these groups and would perhaps be the lowest officer to ride a horse in combat.[90] Occasional references to them appear in documents, such as the administrative documents recording that a commander of fifty had bought a slave (SAA 14.91) or that another had a field (SAA 12.96). One letter to Esarhaddon refers to a recruitment officer who had fifty men under him (SAA 16.105).

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[86] SAA 6.201; for the full corpus of receipts connected to this officer, see SAA 6.201–220; for the receipts connected to the cohort commander Kakkullanu (during the reign of Assurbanipal), see SAA 14.34–58.

[87] For other similar lists, see SAA 7.5–7, 12; for more on the nature and dating of this text, see SAA 7, xiii–xix.

[88] For a study of what a lower-level officer would need to learn to advance to higher levels, see Fabrice De Backer, "'Ce fameux bâton qu'on a dans sa giberne': So you want to be an Assyrian Officer?," *Historiae* 12 (2015): 37–63.

Many receipts indicate that other military professionals also became wealthy, including a royal bodyguard of the personal guard (SAA 14.100), a member of the personal guard (SAA 14.114), and a horse trainer (SAA 14.180–81). Even a commander-of-fifty could buy a servant for seven shekels of silver (SAA 14.91). However, the officers did not always act in appropriate ways. After a commander-of-fifty of Gurrean troops murdered a governor, he took men with him and fled to Shubria. A letter from Assur-dur-paniya to Sargon II tells of the Assyrian pursuers led by Il-dala who were ambushed by the commander-of-fifty. The Assyrians defended themselves and succeeded in wounding the commander-of-fifty (SAA 5.53).[91] A series of letters to Esarhaddon by an anonymous scribe reported on potential dangers to the king.[92] In one letter, he details the crimes of seven people, including the crimes of a chariot driver (SAA 16.63). "[Qurd]î, the chariot driver of the treasury horses, is treading on (the authority of) the [Pa]lace. He has laid his hands on the *cone* [of Ištar], saying: 'Strike (f.s.) me! Let's see (what happens)! Bring me an iron knife (so) I can cut it off and stick it in the [gov]ernor's ass!' I am unable to tell [what else] he has said about everybody."

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[89] Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 120–21; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 154–56.

[90] Fabrice De Backer, "The Smallest Neo-Assyrian Combat Unit," *Historiae* 11 (2014): 20–21.

[91] For more on this incident, see Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 46.

[92] For speculation on the identity of the scribe, see SAA 16, xxx–xxxv.

6.1.5. Later Empires

Details on the Babylonian and Persian command structure are lacking.[93] The Old Testament book of Chronicles records that Nebuchadnezzar II personally led the troops while he was still a crown prince and the Old Testament lists several high officers of the Babylonians, including a רב סריס (*rab ša-rēši*; chief eunuch) (Jer 39:3).[94] Dawson suggests a hierarchical chart of command for the Persians, with the chief general on top (*chiliarch*). Satraps under him then directed the commanders of ten thousand, commanders of one thousand, commanders of hundred, and commanders of ten.[95] However, most of this is speculation, though the lower levels are supported by information from the garrison at Elephantine.[96]

6.1.6. West Semitic

Outside of the Old Testament, the command structure of armies is very difficult to determine since the extant textual data focuses on the king. When officers are mentioned, their relationship to a structure is not provided; for example, Kirta calls for captains (*ṯr*) to join him for a feast.[97] The Old Testament refers to various officers, such as army commander (שר צבא) (2 Sam 24:2), commander of half of the chariot force (1 Kgs 16:9), commanders of the army (שר חיל) (2 Kgs 9:5), and chariot commanders (2 Kgs 8:21), but it is difficult to create a command chart. Joab was the most famous army commander, serving under David and Solomon. Commanders of fifty were sent to Elijah with their men (2 Kgs 1:9–18). The Old Testament refers occasionally to officers in the armies of other nations, but employs the same terms as those used in the Israelite army, such as a group of army commanders (שר צבא) of Aram under Ben-Hadad (1 Kgs 15:20) and the army commander (שר צבא) Naaman later in Aram (2 Kgs 5:1).

Coups often originated in the officer corps. Zimri, the commander of half of the chariot force, rose up and killed Elah to become king in his place (1 Kgs 16:9–10). However, Omri, the army commander, killed Zimri shortly afterward to take his place as king and begin a new dynasty (1 Kgs 16:16–20). Elisha anointed Jehu, a commander of the army, to be king of Israel; Jehu not only killed Joram and all Ahab's line, but also Ahaziah the Judean king (2 Kings 9). Pekah, a captain (שליש), killed Azariah and became king of Israel in his place (2 Kgs 15:25).

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[93] For one chart on what the chain of command might have been for the troops from a Babylonian temple during the Persian period, see MacGinnis, "Role of Babylonian Temples," 500–501.

[94] Joannès, "Guerre et économie dans l'Empire néo-babylonien," 64–66.

[95] Dawson, *First Armies*, 186.

[96] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 342.

[97] Greenstein, "Kirta," 27–30 (*KTU* 1.15 iv–vi).

6.2. Size of Armies

> Generally, operations of war require one thousand fast four-horse chariots, one thousand four-horse wagons covered in leather, and one hundred thousand mailed troops.
>
> —Sun Tzu, *Art of War* 2.1

The size of armies (especially enemy armies) would have been very difficult to determine in ancient times. The size of one's own army could have been determined from scribal records as the army was mustered for battle. For enemies, approximate numbers could have originated from scouts before battle, a visual judgment during battle, or counting the dead and captured after the battle (both Assyrian and Egyptian reliefs depict scribes counting enemy dead). Most numbers of army sizes throughout the ancient Near East appear to be reasonable, but some of the larger numbers are of dubious authenticity. Although it is virtually impossible to determine their trustworthiness, scholars have employed a variety of means to check the veracity of high numbers (though none of these techniques are very effective), such as comparing multiple versions of the same event, assessing their historical plausibility, examining the document as a whole, and evaluating the graphic features of the writing of the number.[98]

6.2.1. Egyptian

As noted above, the company (*sa*) consisted of approximately 250 or 200 men. A host (*pḏt*) consisted of at least two companies, though more detail beyond that is difficult to determine.[99] The largest group was the army (*mšʿ*), but its use was very elastic, serving both as the term to describe the entire group of soldiers on campaign as well as smaller groups. Sometimes the term also refers specifically to infantry as opposed to the chariotry, but at other times it certainly includes chariotry.[100] The foreign troops were often placed in separate units outside the description of the main army, such as Ramesses II referring to "his infantry and chariotry, (and the) Sherden-warriors."[101] However, this is also not consistent as at other times the foreign troops were included in the use of the term "army."[102]

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[98] For this list, see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 74–85.

[99] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 30–32.

Several Egyptian texts provide hints for the size of an army. An inscription from Ramesses IV includes a list of soldiers who went on the expedition to the quarries of Wadi Hammamat. Although it is not a military campaign, it does provide some rough guidelines for the size of expeditions. The inscriptions lists 8,368 people, including 5,000 infantrymen, 2,000 slaves, various officers, 20 scribes, 20 stablemasters, 50 charioteers, and foreign troops.[103] Likewise, P.Anast. 1 refers to a group that is 5,000 men strong.[104] Based on these texts, most scholars think that the number of troops in a division of an army would have been about 5,000.[105]

The two most famous battles of the New Kingdom provide some data for the size of the Egyptian armies, but scholars differ on how reliable it is. Earlier, since Thutmose III took 924 chariots from his enemies at Megiddo, the enemy totaled at least 2,000 men (2 men per chariot). Spalinger uses this number to estimate that Thutmose III's army was around 5,000 men.[106] Approaching the question from a different direction, Redford estimates the Egyptian army at around 10,000 men based on a six-hour exit from the pass and one man emerging from the pass every two seconds. Likewise, he estimates the Canaanite force to be around 10,000 men based on the number of livestock captured and how many calories would need to be supplemented in the soldier's diet with these animals.[107]

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[100] Ibid., 10–13.

[101] *RITA* 2.3A:3.

[102] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 12.

[103] *ARE* 4:225–26; "Wadi Hammamat, Great Stela, Year 3 Expedition (Couyat-Montet No.12)," *RITA* 6.Ramesses IV.10:14–15; Peden, *Egyptian Historical Inscriptions of the Twentieth Dynasty*, 95–97; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 124.

[104] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 106.

[105] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 155–56; Faulkner, "Egyptian Military Organization," 42; Kitchen, *Ramesside Inscriptions: Notes and Comments*, 39; however, Schulman notes that the group in Pap. Anastasi I is called a host and the 5,000 men in the Hammamat text are part of a larger group; see Schulman, *Military Rank*, 79. Based on the reference to a host being 5,000 men, Beal estimates that an Egyptian army (consisting of two hosts), would have been 10,000; see Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 292–93.

[106] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 89–90.

Numbers are not provided for the troops of Ramesses II at the battle of Qadesh, but according to Egyptian records the Hittites numbered around 37,000 men (see discussion in following section). Even if those numbers have been inflated, the Egyptian force under Ramesses II would have needed to have been quite large.[108] Since four divisions are named, scholars think that if each division had around 5,000 men then Ramesses II's army would have numbered about 20,000 men.[109] Other estimates range from 5,000 to 40,000.[110]

Finally, Merenptah also provided numbers of enemies killed and captured in his Libyan campaigns. For example, in one inscription Merenptah claimed that he killed or captured 9,376 Libyans, as well as capturing 44 horses, 9,268 swords, 6,860 bows, and 128,660 quivers of arrows.[111] Given the paucity of information about the Libyans of the time period, it is difficult to know how realistic these numbers are and how large the Egyptian force would needed to have been, but the numbers appear to be reasonable given research on the size of recent nomadic tribes.[112] Some campaigns appear to have been smaller, with a few thousand Libyans killed and captured. However, for the larger campaigns Spalinger estimates again that the size of the Egyptian force would needed to have been around twenty to twenty-five thousand men.[113]

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[107] Redford, *Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, 197–98.

[108] For reliefs showing his large army at Qadesh, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:22–23; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. 1–6; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 281–93.

[109] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 229–30.

[110] John Keegan (*A History of Warfare* [New York: Random House, 1993], 176) says 5,000; Beal (*Organization of the Hittite Military*, 293) calculates 40,000; this number is based on his estimate of each Egyptian division consisting of 10,000 men (see above).

[111] "Heliopolis: Victory Column, Year 5," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.16:29; none of the numbers of killed and captured Libyans are round, perhaps implying that they are more accurate (they could have been counted by scribes after the battle).

[112] David O'Connor, "The Nature of Tjemhu (Libyan) Society in the Late New Kingdom," in *Libya and Egypt c 1300–750 BC*, ed. Anthony Leahy (London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1990), 38–45.

[113] For discussion, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 235–41.

Besides reading the inscriptions, Spalinger also attempts to calculate the potential size of the Egyptian army based on other means. For example, he thinks that the economy of Egypt would allow for an army that was no greater than about thirty- to forty-thousand men (out of nine million Egyptians during the New Kingdom).[114] Based on his calculations regarding provisions of food and water, Spalinger is skeptical about the claims of large armies in Egypt.[115]

6.2.2. Hittite

Historical records preserve a wide variety of numbers concerning the size of the Hittite army. Although three thousand is the largest army mentioned for the Old Hittite Empire (Hattusili I in *KBo* 3.46 obv 39–41 = *CTH* 13.I.A), Beal suggests that larger armies might have been possible as well.[116] One early rank was the "Overseer of 1,000 Chariot Fighters"; since at least two men occupied the rank at the same time, the total number of men in the army would then approach ten thousand, if infantry are included.

The numbers for the later Hittite Empire indicate a much larger army was possible for the Hittites, though the army often operated in smaller numbers. Many texts refer to army sizes of ten thousand and under, such as Mursili II's defeat of nine thousand Kaska (*KBo* 5.8 iii 24–25 = *CTH* 61.II.7.A), Tudhaliya II's defeat of ten thousand enemies (*KUB* 23.11 ii 24–iii 6 = *CTH* 142.2.A), and Sunashshura's army of a hundred teams of chariotry and one thousand foot soldiers (*KBo* 5.1 iv 19–22 = *CTH* 476.A).[117] Two very large troop numbers are provided for Hittite armies, though both of them originate in non-Hittite sources. Most agree that the reference in an Amarna letter (EA 170) to a ninety-thousand-man Hittite army is probably an exaggeration as part of an attempt to convince the pharaoh to intervene. However, more plausible are the Egyptian records that claim the Hittite army at Qadesh was forty thousand five hundred men

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[114] Ibid., 203–4.

[115] Ibid., 36–39.

[116] The material in this section on the Old Hittite Kingdom is drawn from Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 277–82; another number from the time period is one thousand four hundred men (Anitta in *COS* 1.72:184 [*CTH* 1.A]).

[117] More examples of troop sizes can be found in Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 282–96.

(if there were three men per chariot). Some see the numbers as approximately correct; one example is Beal, who sees both armies at about forty- to fifty-thousand men (appealing to large armies in early Mesopotamia as precedent).[118] However, others, who are more skeptical of the numbers based on calculations about the size of the Egyptian army (see previous section), doubt that the Egyptians would be able to count that many Hittite troops, and emphasize the Egyptian tendency to overestimate the size of the enemy army as part of the attempt to glorify the Egyptian troops.[119]

6.2.3. Early Mesopotamia

As elsewhere in the ancient Near East, the size of armies in early Mesopotamia is difficult to determine. Sargon the Great claimed to have a very large army; at one point he boasting that he fed 5,400 men daily at his table.[120] Sargon's son Rimush recorded that he struck down and captured 54,016 men.[121] Other large numbers from Rimush include striking down 15,718 men and taking 14,576 captives (RIME 2:41, E2.1.2.1, 4–13), expelling 3,600 men and annihilating them (RIME 2:44, E2.1.2.2, 29–35), and striking down 12,052 and capturing 5,864 captives (RIME 2:51, E2.1.2.5, 4–12). Although these numbers are very large, Millard argues that the scribes show in other less controversial texts that they are able to deal with large numbers and should be trusted to do so in these texts as well.[122] However, since the numbers of Rimush are approximately ten times that of Sargon, this could be a case of the son proclaiming his greatness over his father and reflect literary embellishment rather than historical reality.[123]

The legends of Naram-Sin record a very large army between two hundred fifty thousand and three hundred fifty thousand (depending on which version of the story is read), but the legendary nature of the account casts grave doubt on the accuracy of the number.[124] A text from Ur records the quite substantial amount of food sent to an army: "159,600 liters of barley (and) 47,400 liters of flour, received by the troops of the military camp when they went on an expedition against the Amorites."[125] Another administrative document (cited in §5.7.3) notes that 155 small livestock were given to returning troops; Lafont estimates that this would be enough to feed around 9,000 men.[126] A letter to Shulgi from his vizier reported that a general on the frontier had an army of 10,000 troops.[127] However, looking at a large sample of military ration texts, Lafont estimates that the average military unit size was about 600 men.[128] Administrative data from Ebla supports the possibility of large armies in the third millennium, as they attest to armies around the size of 20,000 men.[129]

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[118] Ibid., 291–94.

[119] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 36, 229.

[120] RIME 2:29, E2.1.1.11, 29–37.

[121] Ibid., 2:48, E2.1.2.4, 64–72.

[122] Alan R. Millard, "Large Numbers in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," in Cogan, *Ah, Assyria*, 217–18.

[123] David M. Fouts, "Another Look at Large Numbers in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," *JNES* 53 (1994): 205–6; it is also suspicious when Rimush only gives a handful of prisoners to a temple after supposedly capturing thousands of men in his wars; see Gelb, "Prisoners of War in Early Mesopotamia," 74.

The Mari texts recorded army sizes of widely varying amounts.[130] The largest army size comes from a claim of the king of Eshununa that he could raise an army of one hundred twenty thousand men.[131] A sampling of other reported army sizes are as follows: sixty thousand (SH.827 = Sasson 3.3.a.iii.note), forty thousand (ARM 26.379), thirty thousand (ARM 2.67 = LAPO 17.575; ARM 27.18), twenty-two thousand (ARM 1.42 = LAPO 17.448 = Sasson 3.3.a.iii), twelve thousand (ARM 6.27 = LAPO 16.424), ten thousand (ARM 28.10; ARM 28.176), six thousand (ARM 26.373 = Sasson 2.2.e.i.1), and one thousand (ARM 26.422).[132] One letter writer complained about having only three thousand troops, asking what good such a small number would be (ARM 28.1). However, the Mari letters refer most frequently to armies of fewer than two thousand.[133]

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[124] For the texts, see Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 273, 319; De Odorico (*Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 108–9) emphasizes the legendary nature of the account.

[125] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 5.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur*, 250.

[128] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 19–20.

[129] Archi, "Men at War in the Ebla Period," 20–33.

[130] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 198–201; Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 7–9; Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 280–82.

[131] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 199.

[132] SH.827 is also found in Eidem and Lassoe, *Shemshara Archves 1*, 136–38.

[133] For a much longer list, see Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 599–601.

At least the largest reference should most likely be viewed as hyperbolic.[134] A letter quotes Hammurabi saying that the numbers are inflated: “When I dispatch 100 troops the one who hears it will quote it as 1000. And when [I dispatch] 1000 troops, he will quote it at as 10,000.”[135] Perhaps this illustrates that the letter writers knowingly and commonly exaggerated troop sizes. In another possible example of the practice, when his lord complained about how he had not accurately recorded the correct number of troops that had passed through Qattunan, a letter writer (Zakira-Hammu) replied that he just wrote down what the messenger guiding the troops had said was the correct number. Further, the larger number was “because of fiend and foe,” presumably to intimidate the enemy when they heard the number (ARM 27.80).[136] However, one administrative letter from Shamshi-Adad included specific instructions on tallying smaller sections of the army, leading to the grand total of an army around twenty thousand men (ARM 1.42 = LAPO 17.448 = Sasson 3.3.a.iii).[137] The realistic background of this army illustrates that armies of this size might have been rare but did happen occasionally.

6.2.4. Assyrian

As one of the largest empires emanating from the ancient Near East, it is not surprising that Assyria would have had very large armies. However, as elsewhere in the ancient Near East, the accuracy of many of these numbers is heavily contested.[138] The table below lists most records of troop sizes over twenty thousand. Large numbers also appear when describing other parts of the army. In the conclusion of an inscription Shalmaneser III provides the total number of chariots and cavalry for his army: “I hitched up teams of horses to 2,002 chariots (and equipped) 5,542 cavalry for the forces of my land."[139] One of the largest Assyrian armies described in the annals comes from Shalmaneser III, who spoke of taking a very large army west: "In my fourteenth regnal year I mustered (the troops of my) extensive land in countless numbers (and) crossed the Euphrates in flood with 120,000 troops."[140] As seen in the chart, the latest Assyrian kings (Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal) did not employ large numbers to describe their troops or those of the enemy (Esarhaddon never employed any numbers in relation to any groups of humans).

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[134] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 191.

[135] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 199 (ARM 2.23 = LAPO 17.590); also Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 474–75.

[136] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 438.

[137] Part of the text was quoted in §3.3.1.3, above.

[138] For studies of the large numbers in the Assyrian texts, see Grayson, “Assyrian Royal Inscriptions,” 45–46; Millard, “Large Numbers in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions”; Fouts, “Another Look at Large Numbers in Assyrian Royal Inscriptions”; De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*; Fales, “Preparing for War in Assyria”; Fales, *Guerre et paix en Assyrie*, 95–101.

The sizes of many smaller contingents of the Assyrian army are known from inscriptions and letters. Sargon II appointed an army under the control of the left *turtan* consisting of "150 chariots, 1,500 cavalry men, 20,000 bowmen and 10,000 shield-bearers and lancers."[141] A letter to Sargon II lists the amount and types of troops in the city of Mazamua (SAA 5.215 = SAA 19.189).

> To the king my lord, your servant Adad-issiya, may it be well with the king my lord.
> With regard to the king's instruction to me, that I should review the forces of Mat-Zamua and communicate (the result) to him:
>> Ten chariots, two wagons. Ten (teams) of horses, ten (teams) of mules, total twenty teams. Ninety-seven cavalry-horses.
>> Eleven chariot-drivers, twelve "third-riders," ten nobles, 53 grooms.
>> [Twenty] team-commanders: total 106 chariot troops.
>> 161 cavalry-men, 130 grooms, 52 *zunzurāḫu*, total 343 grooms.
>> Eight lackeys, twelve tailors, twenty butlers, twelve victuallers, seven bakers, ten cooks: total 69 domestic servants.
>> Eight scribes.
>> Twenty-three donkey-drivers.
>> One reporter.
>> Eighty *kallāpu*.
>> Total 630 Assyrians,
>> 360 Qurraeans, 440 Ituaeans.
>
> Grand total 1,430 "king's troops," including the previous ones who were here and those the aide-de-camp brought me.

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[139] RIMA 3:41, A.0.102.6, iv.47–48; for a list of other high numbers of cavalry and chariots, see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 183.

[140] RIMA 3:47, A.0.102.8, 44–45.

[141] Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 151.

> In case the king my lord wonders where the rest of the forces are, my major-domo is delayed, and he is bringing the rest of the forces.[142]

Table 1. Assyrian Army Sizes

Assyrian King	Size of army	Assyrian or enemy troops	Source
Arik-den-ili	254,000	Enemy troops	RIMA 1:127, A.0.75.8, 29'
Tiglath-pileser I	20,000	Enemy troops	RIMA 2:24, A.0.87.1, 87
Assurnasirpal II	50,000	Assyrian troops	RIMA 2:309, A.0.101.40, 28
Shalmaneser III	120,000	Assyrian troops	RIMA 3:47, A.0.102.8, 45
	44,400	Enemy troops deported	RIMA 3:28–29, A.0.102.5, 3
	87,500	Enemy troops deported	RIMA 3:103, A.0.102.28, 25
	20,000[143]	Enemy troops	RIMA 3:23, A.0.102.2, 89–84
Sargon II	27,280	Captives added to Assyrian army	Lines 31–34[144]
Sennacherib	150,000	Enemy killed	RINAP 3.1:224, 34, 48
	80,000	Enemy troops	RINAP 3.1:32, I, 8–9
	185,000	Assyrians died	2 Kgs 19:35

De Odorico has offered various ways of analyzing these large numbers. One simple guideline is to take exact numbers as more authentic than round numbers, since presumably with exact numbers they would have come from direct counts by scribes.[145] However, this is complicated by several factors. Since the Assyrians sometimes employed a sexagesimal system, a number that appears to be exact might actually be a round number. For example, 14,400 is a round number in Akkadian, as it was written 4 ŠÁR (4 x 3600). Exact numbers may also be a total of a combination of exact and round numbers, which would reduce the confidence in the total number.[146] Exact numbers could also be fabricated so as to gain authenticity. One way to check on this fabrication is to compare earlier and later accounts of the same events. When that is done, a few numbers can be seen to have been inflated. The most extraordinary jump is the number of sheep taken by Sargon II from Musasir: from 1,285 to 100,225.[147] Another example is the number of enemy troops killed at Qarqar by Shalmaneser III; the number varies between 14,000, 25,000, 29,000, and 20,500.[148] However, such inflation between extant texts is not extensive enough to view it as a standard practice; many of the differences can be ascribed to such factors as scribal error.[149]

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[142] Postgate, "Assyrian Army in Zamua," 90; see also SAA 5.215; SAA 19.189; Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 129.

[143] This is only the troops of Damascus; altogether Shalmaneser III ascribes at least fifty thousand men to the western kings; two of the numbers are illegible, so the total number would have been larger. De Odorico suggests that the original number (perhaps thirty thousand?) was selectively embellished to make it larger but still reasonable (for example, making it three hundred thousand would have been unreasonable); see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 103–7.

[144] Gadd, "Inscribed Prisms of Sargon II," 180.

[145] For more discussion on round and exact numbers, see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 4–8; Millard, "Large Numbers in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," 214–16.

Another way forward is to compare the Assyrian army size numbers to the numbers of other armies in the ancient Near East. Based on the lack of similarly sized armies in contemporary times, de Odorico suggests that the number of men in Shalmaneser III's army has been inflated; it might represent "the theoretical or conventional size of the Assyrian army, but was by no means the size of the army on the battlefield."[150] However, such a comparison is made stronger when the other numbers can be known with more certainty; in this case the same uncertainty surrounds the numbers from other countries as well.

The reality of some numbers that are claimed within specific situations can be tested a little more analytically. For example, Sennacherib claimed to have killed 150,000 men at Halule, but the number seems rather high for a battle that lasted only one day.[151] For the sake of comparison, the first day of the battle of the Somme, one of the deadliest days in British military history, saw approximately sixty thousand casualties, of which twenty thousand died on the battlefield (a hundred thousand British had been part of the attack).[152] If this is the number of men who died in a day of battle with machine guns, it seems unlikely that more than seven times that would die in one battle in ancient times. In a similar vein, Vidal has compared Assyrian casualty counts with those from later Greek and Roman times and argues that the Assyrian numbers are untrustworthy because they claim that they routinely kill 30–40 percent of the enemy rather than 15 percent found in classical sources.[153]

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[146] Millard, "Large Numbers in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," 215–16.

[147] For a discussion, see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 73, 86–88, 112–13; Millard, "Large Numbers in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," 218–19.

[148] For the listing of the data, see De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 49.

[149] Millard, "Large Numbers in the Assyrian Royal Inscriptions," 216–17; De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 45–96.

[150] De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 107–12.

[151] Ibid., 116.

Another way to analyze the army sizes of ancient times is to look at the logistics of such an army, especially its food sources (see above for Spalinger's calculations in regard to the Egyptian army and ch. 3 for a study of SAA 5.250). However, such calculations are difficult to make as they involve a large number of assumptions. In a study of several administrative texts (particularly SAA 5.215 = SAA 19.189, quoted above), Fales attempts to determine the size of an Assyrian armed contingent on campaign, but concludes that "the count of the troops in Mazamua shows totals and inner numerical relations which appear neither representative nor dependable, neither per se nor as parts of a larger whole."[154] However, Fuchs suggests that the contingent Sargon II took on a campaign was representative: "150 wheels, 1500 horses, 20,000 bearers of the bow and 10,000 bearers of shield and spear," giving a contingent size of around 30,000 men.[155]

The contemporary Urartian army left few records, but one text refers to a group of 352,011 men. Unfortunately, the meaning of the text is unclear; this could be referring to the entire populace available for military service rather than the size of an army on campaign or even a standing army.[156]

6.2.5. Later Empires

The size of the Babylonian and Persian armies is unclear. The Babylonian and Aramaic versions of the Bisitun Inscription by Darius (but not the

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[152] John Keegan, *The First World War* (New York: Vintage, 1998), 295.

[153] Jordi Vidal, "Calculating Percentages of Battle Casualties: On the Reliability of Assyrian Annals and Reliefs from the Ninth Century B.C.," *AoF* 40 (2013): 183–92.

[154] Fales, "Grain Reserves, Daily Rations," 34.

[155] Fuchs, "Assyria at War," 388.

[156] Paul E. Zimansky, *Ecology and Empire: The Structure of the Urartian State*, SAOC 41 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1985), 55–57.

Elamite or Persian versions) record specific casualty information for the defeated enemy. Most numbers are moderate (in the low thousands), but two of them are quite large (55,000 and 34,425 enemy dead). However, it is difficult to read the numbers with a high level of certainly. Looking at the comparable Greek and Roman statistics, Hyland doubts the authenticity of these casualty numbers and suspects that they have been inflated by Darius (e.g., armies commanded by Darius personally kill more of the enemy than the armies commanded by his generals).[157] The Greeks provided a few numbers for the size of the Persian army, but it is difficult to know how accurate they are. For example, Herodotus reported that Xerxes possessed an army of over five million men to attack Greece (*Hist.* 7.56–187). However, the foreign troops making up a large percentage of these numbers might have served mainly as a parade army to emphasize the power of the Persian king rather than as part of the field army.[158] Xenophon recorded that Cyrus had an army of eighty thousand foot soldiers and fourteen thousand cavalry against an enemy coalition of two hundred thousand foot soldiers and sixty thousand cavalry (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 2.1.6). He also claimed that near the end of his life Cyrus could muster an army at Babylon that consisted of one hundred twenty thousand cavalry, two thousand chariots with scythes, and six hundred thousand foot soldiers (*Cyr.* 8.6.19).

6.2.6. West Semitic

Army sizes are not often recorded in the West Semitic world. A clearly hyperbolic number of a three-million-man army appears in Kirta.[159] Based on the size of the population of Ugarit and the surrounding villages, Jordi Vidal estimates that the army of Ugarit would have been around four thousand men.[160] The Old Testament contains some very large numbers. Rehoboam raised one hundred eighty thousand chosen warriors to fight Israel (1 Kgs 12:21). The Israelites are said to have killed one hundred thousand Arameans, while another twenty-seven thousand of them died when a wall fell on them (1 Kgs 20:29–30). An army of ten thousand footmen is considered very small (2 Kgs 13:7). Amaziah struck down ten thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt (2 Kgs 14:7). An angel of YHWH struck down 185,000 Assyrian soldiers (2 Kgs 19:35). Some view these numbers hyperbolically based on the annals genre used elsewhere in the ancient Near East.[161] Much attention has also been paid to the translation of the word אלף, which is commonly translated "thousand." However, others have proposed that it would be better translated as "unit," implying much smaller numbers.[162]

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[157] John O. Hyland, "The Casualty Figures in Darius' Bisitun Inscription," *JANEH* 1 (2014): 173–99.

[158] Briant, "Achaemenid Empire," 116–20; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 195–98.

[159] Greenstein, "Kirta," 19 (*KTU* 1.14 iv.16).

[160] Vidal, "Military Conscription in Ugarit," 125–26; for further discussion of the size of the army at Ugarit, see Vidal, "Ugarit at War (1): The Size and Geographical Origin of the *ḫrd*-Militia," *UF* 37 (2006): 655–56.

6.3. Military Scribes

Although not directly combat units, military scribes played an important role in organizing the armies, ensuring the men had sufficient provisions on the campaign, categorizing the plunder, and recording the events of the campaign for posterity. Most ancient Near Eastern armies employed scribes who traveled along with the armies on campaign to perform these important tasks.

6.3.1. Egyptian

Scribes played an important role in the Egyptian military.[163] The Hammamat 12 Inscription lists twenty scribes for approximately five thousand men, providing each company (two hundred men) with one scribe.[164] Based on the variety of military scribes, it appears that the scribes had their own scribal hierarchy and were often high-ranking in the military structure.[165] Haremhab, a scribe during the Eighteenth Dynasty, referred to himself with various scribal titles, including royal scribe, scribe of recruits, superintendent of horses, and superintendent of all the royal scribes of the army. He also notes that he escorted the pharaoh on his campaigns in foreign lands.[166] The scribe Amenhotep (who lived during the reign of Amenhotep III) was another high-ranking scribe. After his work as a scribe, he was promoted to "overseer of every work." He became well known for his wisdom in later times. This selection describes his duties as a scribe.

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[161] David M. Fouts, "The Incredible Numbers of the Hebrew Kings," in *Giving the Sense: Understanding and Using Old Testament Historical Texts*, ed. David M. Howard Jr. and Michael A. Grisanti (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2003), 283–99.

[162] For a debate in the pages of *Vetus Testamentum* about this issue, see Colon J. Humphreys, "The Number of People in the Exodus from Egypt: Decoding Mathematically the Very Large Numbers in Numbers I and XXVI," *VT* 48 (1998): 196–213; Rüdiger Heinzerling, "On the Interpretation of the Census Lists by C. J. Humphreys and G. E. Mendenhall," *VT* 50 (2000): 250–52; Humphreys, "The Numbers in the Exodus from Egypt: A Further Appraisal," *VT* 50 (2000): 323–28.

[163] For more on military scribes, see Schulman, *Military Rank*, 62–66; Kadry, *Officers and Officials in the New Kingdom*, 18–19.

[164] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 124. no. 240; also *ARE* 4:225–26.

> My Lord, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebmare, has repeated favours for me. He has combined every eye for me, marshaled and set under my oversight, as the King's scribe, chief of the recruits. I have levied the troops of my Lord. My reed pen counts the numbering of millions, and I caused the new men to be well installed on the seat(s) of their families—the staff of old age as his beloved son. I assessed households at the (appropriate) numbers thereof. I have separated out the gangs from their homes. I made up the (numbers of) serfs with the best of the booty which His Majesty has plundered upon the battlefield. I have inspected all of their gangs, and I have levied [the recruits]. I have put the troops at the head of the road, in order to repulse the foreigners from their places which surround the Two Banks (= Egypt), by keeping an eye on the travelling of the Sandfarers. I have done likewise upon the bank(s) at the river-mouth, surrounded by my troops, quite apart from the crews of the royal sailors. It is I who conduct their way, and they trust in my utterance. I was the supreme chief before the brave ones, in order to smite the Nubians and the Asiatics.[167]

The scribe Tjenna also recorded several duties. "Writing down soldiers in the presence of his majesty (and?) registering the various classes eligible for military service for the 'elite troops,' and causing every man to know his duties in the entire army by the scribe of the king, his beloved, the army-scribe Tjenna."[168] He also played an important role in mustering troops.[169] Several military scribes from the time of Ramesses II left inscriptions that illustrate the high nature of some scribes, including To, a "Scribe of the Chariot Span of Pharaoh" (*RITA* 3.134.XI.18:177), Amenemhab, a "Scribe of the Chariotry" *(RITA* 3.134.XI.19:178), Neferhor, an "Army-Scribe," (*RITA* 3.136.XI.33:183), and Sety, a "Scribe of Recruits" (*RITA* 3.136.XI.35:184). Nehesy, who served in the Nineteenth Dynasty, describes himself as both an overseer of the army and as a royal scribe. A portion of an inscription on a doorjamb from Memphis describes some of his duties and accomplishments.

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[165] For speculation about the scribal organizational chart, see Schulman, *Military Rank*, 84–85.

[166] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 3*, 290–91, §§522–523 (Tomb of Ḫaremḫab; Graffitti at Konosso).

[167] Benedict G. Davies, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 5* (Warminster, England: Aris & Phillips, 1994), 18, §658; also *ARE* 2:374.

> Who guides a man on his journeys.
> My lord perceived me for my excellence
> and he appointed me to the position of a (royal) confidant,
> magnifying me among the officials;
> I was promoted to the council of thirty;
> for the *ka* of the true royal scribe, beloved of him,
> overseer of the army of the lord of the Two Lands,
> Nehesy, true of voice … (?).[170]

The tomb inscription at El-Mashayikh of the High Priest of Onuris, Anhurmose, describes his activity as a scribe and interpreter for the pharaoh's army in foreign lands during the reign of Merenptah.

> I was a scribe of the army and the chariotry,
> (which are) numerous and great without limit,
> an interpreter for every foreign land in the presence of ⌜his⌝ lord.
> I was a strong scribe among his attendants.[171]

When scribes accompanied armies on the march in Egypt, they apparently recorded the events of the battle in hieratic on leather scrolls while they were still in the field, commonly called the day-books. Later, these accounts served as the basis for more expansive literary accounts of the pharaoh in battle.[172] Various reliefs depict scribes counting hands brought back by warriors from battle or piles of hands (fig. 6.1).[173] They also counted other parts of the spoil, such as prisoners (fig. 6.2). However, it appears that they might have avoided combat itself. The scribe Dhutmose wrote this letter to another scribe during the reign of Ramesses XI to describe how the scribe should act in battle.

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[168] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 91, no. 29.

[169] Ibid., 92, no. 30; for more on Tjenna, see Bryan, *Reign of Thutmose IV*, 279–80.

[170] Frood, *Biographical Texts from Ramessid Egypt*, 201.

[171] Ibid., 109; also *RITA* 4.Merneptah.89:109.

> When my letter reaches you, don't go out to observe a melee, since it is not as a combat soldier that you have been called up nor is it as a mere henchman that you have been called up. It is in order that advice may be sought of you that you have been taken along. Stay put in this boat, protecting yourself against arrows, spears, and sto[nes], and don't abandon us all, since you know that you are a father to all of us. There is no one here from whom we seek advice about our livelihood.[174]

A scribal letter was included in P.Anast. 1 to serve as a model for teaching; it was written by the scribe Hori during the reign of Ramesses II to "the royal command-writing scribe of the victorious army." The end of the letter mocks the recipient for his rote memorization of geographical locations but an inability to use that knowledge.

> O What's-your-name?, you elite scribe and Maher-warrior, who know how to use your hands, a leader of the Naarin-troops at the head of the soldiery, I have described to you the hill countries of the northern reaches of the land of Canaan, but you have not answered me in any way nor have you rendered a report to me. Come, and [I] will describe [ma]ny things [to] you. Head toward(?) the fortress of the Way[s of Hours]. I begin for you with the Dwelling of the Sese, l.p.h. You have not set foot in it at all. You have not eaten fish from [its pool(?)] nor bathed in it…. You Maher-warrior, where is Raphia? What is its enclosure wall like? How many miles march is it to Gaza? Answer quickly! Render a report to me that I may call you a Maher-warrior and boast of your name to others. "He is a Maryan-warrior," so I shall tell them.[175]

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[172] See Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians*, 120–22.

[173] For other references, see discussion in §5.2.1, above.

[174] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 197.

[175] Ibid., 109; also *COS* 3.2:9–14; *ANET*, 475–79.

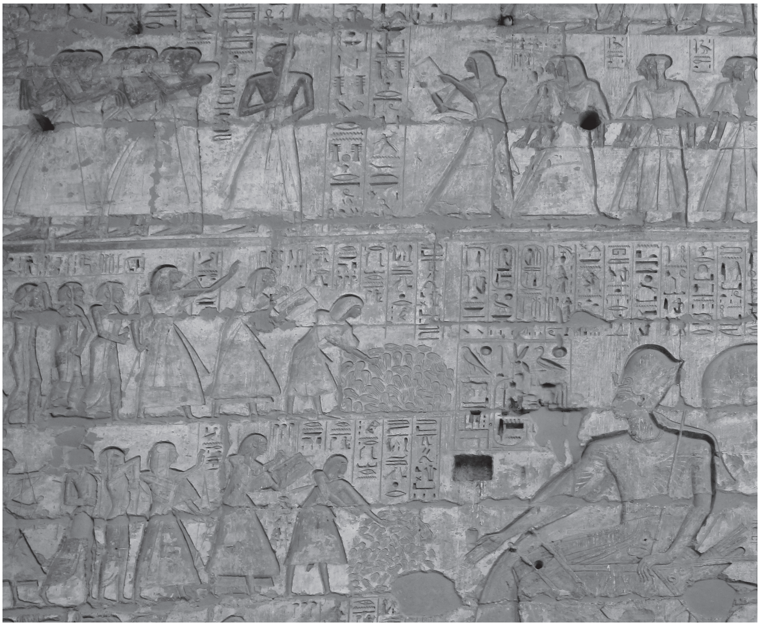

Fig. 6.1. Egyptian scribes under Ramesses III. Medinet Habu, Egypt. Photo courtesy of Olaf Tausch, Wikimedia Commons.

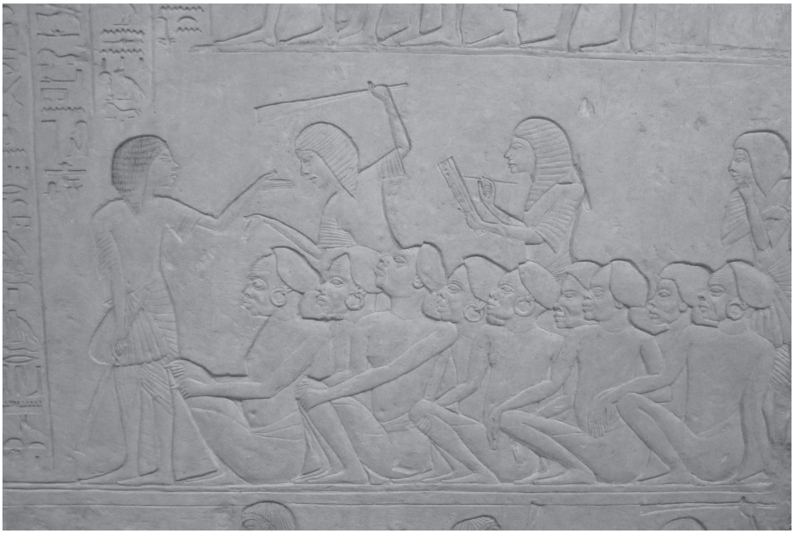

Fig. 6.2. Egyptian scribes counting prisoners in tomb of Horemheb. KS 1887 in Archeological Museum of Bologna (Italy). Picture courtesy of Khruner, Wikimedia Commons.

6.3.2. Hittite

Although the title Military Wood-Scribe is known,[176] evidence for the role of scribes in the Hittite military is minimal. Since many of the extant Hittite letters deal with matters near the front, presumably scribes were present in these areas to write the letters. This theory is supported by the detailed numbers included in the annals of such things as prisoners, indicating that most likely a scribe was on hand to keep track of them.[177]

6.3.3. Early Mesopotamian

Although scribes were certainly present in early Mesopotamia, their role in the military is not referred to frequently. A text from Old Babylonia refers to a large amount of sesame owed to a military scribe.[178] An itinerary of a royal campaign implies that scribes accompanied the king.[179] In the interchange between Shulgi and his officers (recorded above) Abaindasa claimed that "I am a (trained) scribe—I can inscribe a stele!"[180] However, Aradmu accused him of missing two thousand men when he registered the troops.[181]

The many letters in the Mari archives indicate that scribes must have been present with military forces, but records of military scribes are rare. Ibal-pi-El accused a scribe of making a mistake in a letter transmitting information from a sheikh in Der to the king; instead of recording Haduraha was captured, the scribe wrote Aparha.[182] Administrative documents record that a scribe received approximately the same amount as division commanders (*rab pirsim*) (ARM 23 435; 25.815).[183] A letter from Zimri-Adad records a dispute about sealing tablets and notes that it is Laʾum, the army secretary, who is responsible for sealing tablets (ARM 27.151).

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[176] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 10.

[177] Bryce, *Life and Society in the Hittite World*, 62.

[178] Richardson, *Texts from the Late Old Babylonian Period*, 40–41 (BM 80339).

[179] Foster, "Management and Administration in the Sargonic Period," 27–28.

[180] Michalowski, *Correspondence of the Kings of Ur*, 306.

[181] Ibid., 330.

[182] A.427+ = Sasson 2.2.f.i.3; for more on the historical background of the letter and the argument that Ibal-pi-El was actually at fault rather than the scribe, see Jack M. Sasson, "The Burden of Scribes!," in *Riches Hidden in Secret Places: Studies in Memory of Thorkild Jacobsen*, ed. Tzvi Abusch (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 211–28.

[183] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 498–500.

6.3.4. Assyrian

Based on the sheer amount of material from Assyria, scribes must have played an active role. One of the most prominent roles of scribes in relation to warfare was the counting of plunder. Beginning with the reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III, many reliefs depict a pair of scribes in plunder scenes, one holding a tablet writing in Akkadian and other a scroll writing in Aramaic (fig. 6.3).[184] As noted in the previous chapter, scribes also counted the heads of dead enemies, such as in a relief from Sennacherib that depicts two scribes counting the heads of the enemy that have been brought to them.[185]

It is unknown if scribes composed battle diaries that formed the basis of later accounts (no such documents have survived).[186] If the battle diaries were created, they could have formed the basis for annual letters to the god, which then became the annals.[187] The meager evidence of the letters to the gods might indicate that the scribes wrote a report of the king's campaign that was presented to the god before the king could perform his triumphal procession.[188] The scribes could have also prepared rough sketches on campaign that would form the basis for the later reliefs (SAA 15.136 refers to a sketch of a fort written on a piece of leather sent by a scribe).[189] Scribes would also have been active in mustering troops. According to a letter to Sargon II, a scribe accompanied the recruitment officers when they mustered troops (SAA 15.105). A letter such as SAA 5.215 to the king listing all the various parts of an armed contingent would have been the work of a scribe.

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[184] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 6; for other examples, see *ANEP*, 74, no. 236 (BM 124955); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:438 (BM 124956); for a complete list of scribes in Assyrian reliefs (and pictures of most of them), see Reade, "Visual Evidence for the Status," 702–4, 712–16. For more on which kind of media would have been used to write in Aramaic, see Frederick Mario Fales, "The Use and Function of Aramaic Tablets," in Bunnens, *Essays on Syria in the Iron Age*, 122–24.

[185] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 56, no. 51 (Or.Dr.IV.14); see also pl. 83, no. 102 (Or.Dr.I.70).

[186] De Odorico, *Use of Numbers and Qualifications*, 117.

[187] Reade, "Visual Evidence for the Status and Activities of the Assyrian Scribes," 699.

[188] Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 330–31.

[189] Reade, "Visual Evidence for the Status," 710–12.

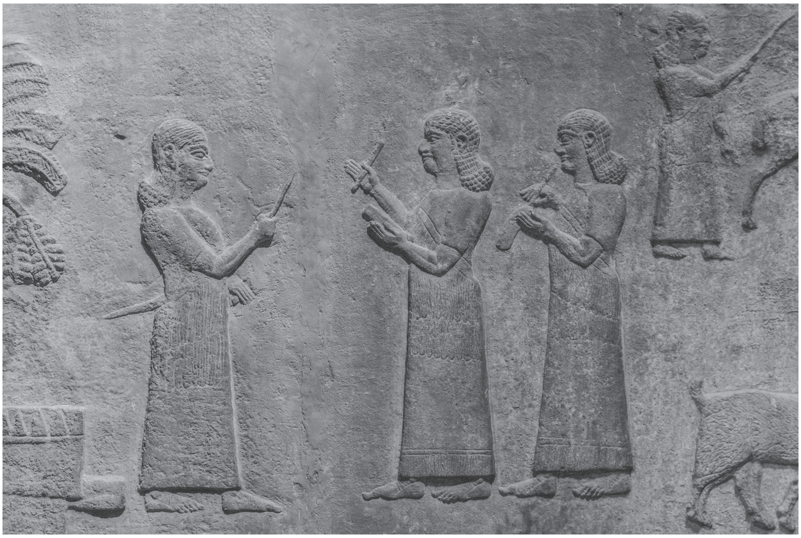

Fig. 6.3. Assyrian scribes under Tiglath-pileser III. BM 118882; Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

6.3.5. Later Empires

As elsewhere in the ancient Near East, scribes played an important role in the Babylonian and Persian empires, but few records remain of the role of military scribes. The registration notice of a Babylonian soldier during the reign of Darius II refers to “Zabin, the foreman of the scribes of the army.”[190] Many interpreters were present in the Persian army due to the many languages spoken.[191]

6.3.6. West Semitic

Little is known about the role of scribes in the military in the West Semitic world. In the book of Kings, various secretaries are mentioned (1 Kgs 4:3; 2 Kgs 18:18; 22:3), but their role is unclear, especially when it came to warfare. Shebnah the secretary came to the wall to speak to Rabshakeh during the siege of Jerusalem by Sennacherib (2 Kgs 18:18). A secretary of the commander of the army was taken into exile (2 Kgs 25:19).

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[190] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 723.

[191] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 509.

6.4. Training and Life at Home

> Have them deploy in circular formations, then change to square ones. Have them sit, then get up; move, then halt. Have them move to the left, then the right; forward and to the rear. Have them divide and combine, unite and disperse. When all these changes are familiar, provide them with weapons.
>
> —Wu-Tzu 3

> Thus when teaching the commanders and officers, one man who has completed his study of combat instruction will extend them to ten men.
>
> —T'ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 54

The rest of the chapter will examine various areas of life for the ordinary soldier, beginning with the training undergone by the soldiers and their life at home.

6.4.1. Egyptian

During the First Intermediate period a nomarch named Kay said, "I recruited (the city's) draftees of young men in order that its levees be numerous; for the draftees had retired into the (ranks of the) commons, dwelling in their houses, and never marched forth during the period of terror of the king's house.… I trained my draftees of young men and went to fight along with my city."[192] A tomb painting of User-het from the time of Amenhotep II depicts new recruits receiving a haircut.[193]

Officers appear to have employed many beatings when training soldiers, at least as described in the satirical accounts of martial life by the scribes (which are not the most reliable sources).[194] Papyrus Chester Beatty IV describes the beatings in this way: "He is beaten with exertions. He awakes in the morning (only) to receive beatings until he is split open with wounds.… A painful blow is given to his body, a doubling blow upon his pate, a turning upside-down blow is given to his eyes, and a falling-down blow to his nose. He halts and he is beaten like a piece of papyrus."[195] The scribal parody in P.Lansing implies that having many commanders is not helpful for the soldiers: "Come, (let me describe) to you the woes of a soldier even as his superiors are many."[196] Kenamun was appointed to be a steward and a governor by being told, "Your baton is upon the backs of the army."[197] However, when the treasurer Harurre led an army in the Middle Kingdom, he reported that his army was in good health because "I led my army very kindly, and I was not loud-voiced toward the workmen."[198]

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[192] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times*, 73; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 428.

[193] *ANEP*, 24, no. 80 (Met 30.4.40); Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 1:44; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 84.

[194] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 77.

According to P.Beatty 4, the soldiers trained every day: "He is equipped with weapons upon his arm, he standing upon the battlefield [drillfield] every day."[199] Training might have included such activities as using sand bags as weights, throwing knives, and fighting with weapons.[200] The scribal parody in P.Lansing describes the exhausting day of a soldier: "After he has been waken up whilst it is (yet) an hour, one is after him like (after) a donkey, and he works until the sun sets under its darkness of night."[201] Papyrus Leiden 371 also describes specialized training for the chariotry.[202] It appears that a variety of combat sports were practiced among the Egyptians, including wrestling, stick fighting, and boxing.[203] The tombs at Beni Hasan provide extensive evidence for wrestling, including different holds and techniques (fig. 6.4). Since the wrestling scenes are juxtaposed with martial scenes (as in grave 15 of the tomb of Batqi III), most likely the wrestling was training for the troops.[204] Stick fighting is also attested during the New Kingdom, with fighters sometimes holding a stick in each hand. Only

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[195] Ibid., 107, no. 123.

[196] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 401.

[197] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 97, no. 74.

[198] *ARE* 1:323.

[199] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 77, 107, no. 123.

[200] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 84–86; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 428.

[201] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 401.

[202] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 61.

[203] For more details and images of all these sports, see Decker, *Sport and Games of Ancient Egypt*, 70–89; a modern descendant of stick fighting called tahtib continues to be practiced in Egypt.

[204] Ibid., 76–77; for an artist's reconstruction of several wrestling matches, see Nic Fields, *Soldier of the Pharaoh: Middle Kingdom Egypt 2055–1650 BC*, Warrior 121 (Oxford: Osprey, 2007), 9.

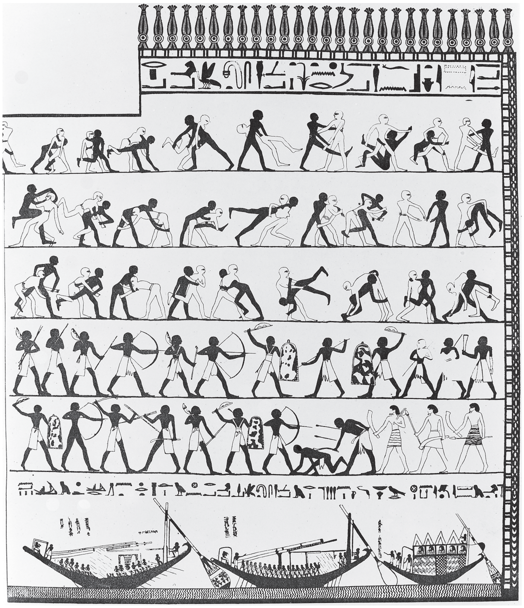

Fig. 6.4. Dueling positions in Beni Hasan. Tomb 2 of Beni Hasan, Egypt. Drawing from Percy E. Newberry, *Beni Hasan: Part One*, pl. 16.

one source remains for boxing (the tomb of Kheruef); it depicts six pairs of men with unprotected hands punching each other.

Reliefs from Ramesses III show a series of men fighting in the presence of the king (fig. 6.5).[205] Since at least one of the duels is between an Egyptian and a Libyan, these could be staged combats with prisoners. One Egyptian says to his opponent "Woe to you, O Nubian foe!: I make you take a fall, helpless, in the presence of Pharaoh!"[206] However, at least one of the duels is between two Egyptians. Herodotus refers to traditional fighting during a festival of Ares that might have provided military training (*Hist.* 2.63).

Soldiers were often enlisted to do other duties, such as garrison duty and accompanying important officials.[207] They could also be enlisted to

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[205] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:158–158a; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pl. 112.

[206] "Medient Habu (and Ramesseum): Ceremonial Games before Pharaoh," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.43:89; another wrestler addresses his opponent as a Syrian.

[207] For an artist's reconstruction of the barracks area of a frontier garrison, see Vogel, *Fortifications of Ancient Egypt*, 40.

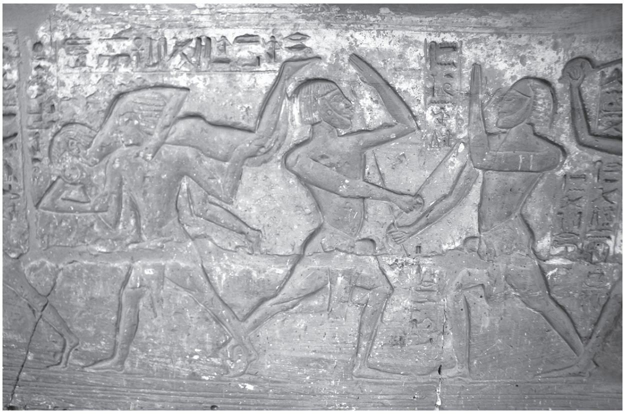

Fig. 6.5. Dueling at Medinet Habu (Ramesses III). Medinet Habu, Egypt. Photo courtesy of Asta, Wikimedia Commons.

help with various monumental building projects or harvesting.[208] For example, the author of a letter in P.Turin B commanded that three companies of infantrymen were needed to work in a temple.[209] Charioteers were also often tasked with being royal envoys.[210] Sometimes this work was done illegitimately. A letter in P.Turin B says, "Let it not come to pass that some idle whilst the others work, their standard-bearers having seized the others for the sake of performing their (own) commissions."[211] Which officer had the authority to send soldiers to work in the field could cause friction. A letter in P.Anast. 6 records the complaint of Inena about a steward named Seba. "It is so that the infantryman of the ship was seized, the one whose field-work was assigned to me. Someone has given him to the prison in the village of Ṯbnt, and he is ploughing (the fields) on behalf of the army scribe Pamerkaw, who lives in the village of Ṯbnt. He wasted twenty-three days while his field was abandoned. The steward Seba is doing every kind of evil there."[212]

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[208] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 260; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 97–98.

[209] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 469; see also Schulman, *Military Rank*, 111, no. 142.

[210] Mohamed Raafat Abbas, "A Survey of the Diplomatic Role of the Charioteers in the Ramesside Period," in Veldmeijer, *Chasing Chariots*, 17–27; for a study of the role of a chariot stationed at a mine, see Yuval Yekutieli, "The Chariots Engraving of Timna' (Israel) Revisited," *BASOR* 375 (2016): 171–84.

[211] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 470; see also Schulman, *Military Rank*, 111, no. 142.

Little is known about men who became too old to continue to serve as a soldier. Papyrus Anastasi 2 might refer to the retirement of a soldier when it discusses what might be the life cycle of a soldier: the child serves a soldier (when the child is taken away from his mother), a young man serves as a warrior in limited ways, and then as an old man he becomes a farmer.[213]

6.4.2. Hittite

A few texts refer to training and disciplining Hittite troops.[214] Ritual fights (and perhaps bull jumping) might have served to help train the troops.[215] One text includes the duties of the *uralla*-, which might be translated as a "training sergeant." The following text includes a few of his duties. The text goes on to describe an archery contest in front of the king, with rewards for the successful and punishment for those who failed.

> At night he continually goes on (lit. runs) maneuvers (?). They found (var. he finds) mistakes. Since they made a high barber-stool for Šuppiuman and Marašša, they seated one (Š) in front of his (Š's) *ubati* (troop unit?), and the other (M.) they seated in front of his (M.'s) *ubati* (troop unit?).
>
> They are always calling at night, because he places/placed their young Chariot Fighters for?/on? horses. He teaches them about the arrow, the sharpening-wheel(?) (and) the holding of the weapon. Then he trained (and) this one he trained.[216]

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[212] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 104, no. 107; also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 280.

[213] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 51; Anthony J. Spalinger, *Five Views on Egypt*, LingAegSM 6 (Göttingen: Seminar für Ägyptologie und Koptologie, 2006), 27–29.

[214] Bryce, "Hittites at War," 83–85.

[215] Charles Carter, "Athletic Contests in Hittite Religious Festivals," *JNES* 47 (1988): 185–87; Amir Gilan, "Kampfspiele in hethitischen Festritualen-Eine Interpretation," in *Kulturgeschichten: Altorientalistische Studien für Volkert Haas zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Thomas Richter, Doris Prechel, and Jörg Klinger (Saarbrücken: Saarbrücker, 2001), 113–24.

[216] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 128, 535–56 (*KBo* 3.34 ii; *CTH* 8.A).

Hittite soldiers often performed work other than fighting. For example, the Hittite king commanded Kassu not to levy veteran troops and auxiliary troops from the district of EN-tarawa because they were busy completing an important project moving cattle.[217] Apparently because some soldiers were less than enthusiastic about their work, Tudhaliya I ordered his men to perform their tasks well, whether it was combat or physical labor: "When there is some task, though, either cons[truc]tion duty or any task whatsoever, you must show up for it, and you must perform it wholehe[(art)]edly, as it should be a robust, long-lasting achievement."[218] A few texts refer to retired soldiers; the "veteran troops" (*annalli-*) had retired but were still available to be called up for service.[219]

6.4.3. Early Mesopotamian

A text from Ur III might indicate that the standing army trained the conscripts. "So many professional soldiers/so many following conscripts/(their) captain (being) PN."[220] In a letter Yamsum told Zimri-Lim about his childhood being trained as a soldier without any training as a farmer: "Since being a child, I lived the life of a soldier; I was not able to hold the front of a plow."[221] Various seals and reliefs depict wrestling matches, which might have been training for combat.[222] Soldiers received some benefits from fighting. Several Mari texts list how much each soldier made in silver shekels.[223] As noted above, soldiers were to be protected against greedy officers in the Laws of Hammurabi, especially in the area of gifts given to the soldiers by the king (§34). However, they also stipulate that if someone bought livestock from a soldier that had been given to him by the king, then he would not able to keep the money (§35). Likewise, he was not able to sell property (presumably property given to him by the king), and he was not able to even give it to his wife or daughter unless he had bought the property himself (§§36–39, 41). One letter records the importance of feeding the troops well to keep them happy (ARM 1.52 = LAPO 16.62).[224]

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[217] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 103 (*HKM* 5).

[218] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 148–49 (*CTH* 259).

[219] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite* Kingdom, 103; Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 60 (*HKM* 5; *CTH* 186).

[220] Lafont, "The Army of the Kings of Ur," 11 (OrSP 47–49, 466).

[221] Richardson, "Mesopotamia and the 'New' Military History," 25 (ARM 26.333).

[222] Silvia Festuccia, "Sport Representation: Transfer Images of Agonistic Contests," in Kaelin, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress*, 1:99–110.

[223] For a chart, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 196; the texts include ARM 23.435, ARM 24.94, ARM 25.815, and A.486+ = LAPO 17.579; for translations see Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 498–500, 507–8.

As elsewhere, troops in early Mesopotamia performed many tasks in addition to fighting. At Ur III the troops were employed in such duties as bodyguards for high-ranking officials, maintaining security, messengers, and working in the harvest.[225] In the Mari letters, Zakira-Hammu requested troops from Zimri-Lim to harvest the crops in the face of locust swarms (ARM 27.27).[226] One letter from Shamshi-Adad to his son records a command that soldiers were responsible for both fortifying a town and transporting wine.

> The contingent which was to transport wine to Mari, let it remain five days. Have the men fortify Mašmiyānum and Šalluriya. As to the contingent which I have hired and which resides as an important body, let it work during the day and guard during the night. After it has fortified these cities, let that contingent, which is to transport the wine, bring (the wine) to Mari. As to the other contingent, let it return to guard-duty.[227]

Yansib-Adad reported to Zimri-Lim that his servant Haya-Adad was assigned to guard duty in Qattunan, but his name had then been chosen for convoy duty. Yansib-Adad requested that the king release his servant from convoy duty so he could stay with him (ARM 26.448). However, some tasks were apparently too difficult for the soldiers. A letter from Mari records that troops were unable to remove two lions lying down near a city gate, requiring several nomads to do the chore (ARM 26.106 = Sasson 2.2.f.ii). Some evidence also points to a greater role for women in the workforce during wars when the men were busy fighting.[228] One letter refers to veterans who were not receiving enough food (ARM 28.114).

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[224] For more on this theme, see N. Ziegler, "Samsî-Addu et ses soldats," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 49–55.

[225] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 8–10.

[226] See also ARM 27.30, ARM 27.36, and ARM 27.37; troops were also requested to dredge an irrigation canal in ARM 27.40.

[227] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 5 (ARM 2.3 = LAPO 17.481).

[228] Agnès Garcia-Ventura, "Women, Work and War: A Proposal to Analyze

6.4.4. Assyrian

References to training are rare in Assyrian texts. A patient with a nosebleed under the direction of a *rab mūgi* might have been the result of military training (SAA 10.322).[229] One text refers to trainees (*tarbû*) being placed under the control of the recruitment officers (SAA 15.105). Various competitions, including running and wrestling, were held in Assyria throughout the year in ritual contexts that might have trained men for the military.[230] Based on parallels in other cultures (especially the army of Napoleon), de Backer has divided into three groups the basic skills a new recruit would need to learn in the Assyrian army: the school of the soldier (basic marching and fencing techniques), the school of the platoon (tactical formations, crossing rivers, and building fortified camps), and the school of the battalion (combined forces tactics). Beyond these basics, the soldiers would also be trained in their specific role (especially the archers).[231]

When they were not fighting, soldiers performed other tasks important to the crown. A letter to Sargon II described their work cutting down trees in the mountains of Shubria, where the wood was intended for doors and roofs (SAA 5.25). Cutting down trees sometimes involved extra danger, such as when they cut down trees in enemy territory (SAA 5.33).[232] Soldiers also frequently served as messengers of important documents.[233]

6.4.5. Later Empires

The Persians extensively trained their young men in battle.[234] According to Herodotus, the most important part of being a man was valor in battle. They trained their boys to ride horses, shoot bows, and tell the truth (*Hist.* 1.136). Xenophon said that troops at home underwent training in the bow

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Their Relationship during the Neo-Sumerian Period," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 345–52.

[229] Mattila, *King's Magnates*, 134.

[230] Radner, "Fame and Prizes," 37–38.

[231] De Backer, "'Ce fameux bâton qu'on a dans sa giberne,'" 39–49.

[232] For more on the difficulties of logging near the enemy, see Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 152–53.

[233] SAA 1:xiv.

[234] Briant, "Achaemenid Empire," 113–16; Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 327–30.

and spear (including public contests) and a variety of other tasks like garrison duty and keeping order (*Cyr.* 1.2.12).

6.4.16. West Semitic

Little is known about training in the West Semitic world. Anat is said to have taught Aqhat how to hunt (*KTU* 1.18.i.29), while the psalmist recorded that YHWH trained his hands for battle (2 Sam 22:35/Ps 18:35[34]).[235] The story of the return home of Uriah from the battlefield provides a glimpse at leave, but it is unclear how paradigmatic his actions are.[236]

6.5. Life on Campaign

> When the army's wells have not yet been completed, the general does not mention thirst. When the encampment has not yet been secured, the general does not speak about fatigue. When the army's cookstoves have not yet been lit, the general does not speak about hunger. In the winter he does not wear a fur robe; in the summer he does not use a fan; and in the rain he does not set up an umbrella.
>
> —Three Strategies of Huang Shih-Kung 1[237]

> When men have minds set on victory, all they see is the enemy. When men have minds filled with fear, all they see is their fear.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 4

The next topic to examine is the soldier's life during the campaign. Although parts of this have been covered in the previous chapter on preparing for war, this section will focus on the ordinary soldier's experience of life during the campaign and the hardships endured during his time away from home. It will also look at the practice of medicine on the field and camp life during the campaign.

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[235] Mark S. Smith, *Poetic Heroes: Literary Commemorations of Warriors and Warrior Culture in the Early Biblical World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 16.

[236] For one detailed reading of the story, see Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*, ISBL 453 (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 186–229.

[237] For a similar sentiment, see T'ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 23, where the general is to act in this way so the men are happy and excited to fight.

6.5.1. Egyptian

Not surprisingly, the scribal parodies claim that life on campaign was often very difficult for the common soldiers, as illustrated by this text from P.Anast. 4.

> What is it that you say they relate, that the soldier's is more pleasant than the scribe's (profession)? Come, let me tell you the condition of the soldier, that much castigated one. He is brought while a child to be confined in the camp. A searing beating is given his body, an open wound inflicted on his eyebrows. His head is split open with a wound. He is laid down and he is beaten like papyrus. He is struck with torments. Come, let me relate … to you his journey to Khor and his marching upon the hills. His rations and his water are upon his shoulder like the load of an ass, while his neck has been made a backbone like that of an ass. The vertebrae of his back are broken, while he drinks of foul water. He stops work (only) to keep watch. He reaches the battle, and he is like a plucked fowl. He proceeds to return to Egypt, and he is like a stick which the worm has devoured. He is sick, prostration overtakes him. He is brought back upon an ass, his clothes taken away by theft, his henchman fled. Scribe Inena, turn back from the saying that the soldier's is more pleasant than the scribe's (profession).[238]

However, although many scribal texts emphasize the harsh discipline of troops, they might reflect a harsher view than what happened in reality. Papyrus Turin commanded superiors to treat their soldiers with some measure of decency: "giving no order to a sick soldier to erect the stone."[239] The fear that many soldiers must have faced when it came to battle is referenced in P.Lansing: "'They say: 'Hurry up, forward, o valiant soldier, win for yourself a good name!' But he knows not himself. His body is weak and his knee is feeble on account of him (i.e., the enemy)."[240] In graffiti left on the way to a battle in Nubia, most likely during the reign of either Amenemhat I or Sesostris I, a common soldier, Ameny, speaks of hating death. "I am a man of the troops, who attacks the hero, (but) who loves life and hates death."[241]

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[238] Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 441 ("The Hardships of the Soldier's Life [Pap. Anastasi IV, 9, 4–10, 1]); for another translation, see Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 169.

[239] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 470; for another translation, see Schulman, *Military Rank*, 77–78, 111, no. 142.

[240] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 401; also *AEL* 2.172.

References to medical care in the field are rare.[242] The scribal parody in P.Lansing describes a soldier on an expedition: "His body is broken (with) dysentery."[243] A skull of an Egyptian (now in a museum in Aswan) shows that the individual suffered a mace wound, but appears to have survived it.[244] A group of bodies in Deir el Bahri at Luxor (found in 1923) were shown to be soldiers who had died in battle during the Middle Kingdom (some of the bodies still had arrows protruding from them), perhaps during the time of Nebhetepre-Mentuhotep I or sometime later. Some of them had been shot in the back (most likely while retreating) and others had been hit in the head by blunt objects (such as stones dropped from a wall or in hand-to-hand combat).[245] The relief of the battle of Qadesh at Abu Simbel might include a soldier in the camp (top left corner) being examined by a medic.[246] A relief of Ramesses II (from Derr) depicts his victory over a group of Nubians, two of whom are carrying their fellow soldier (who is presumably wounded) away from the battle.[247]

A letter from the time of Ramses XI requested bandages be sent to the troops in Nubia. "As soon as my letter reaches you, you shall send some old clothes in the form of many strips.… And don't let them go to waste (?), for they shall be made into bandages with which to wrap up men. You know about this expedition which I am going to make. Send them on to me quickly! Don't let them delay either on your part."[248]

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[241] Parkinson, *Voices from Ancient Egypt*, 96.

[242] Heagren, "The Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 203–5; Richard A. Gabriel and Karen S. Metz, *A History of Military Medicine*, Contributions in Military Studies 124 (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1992), 1:71–83.

[243] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 401; also *AEL* 2.172.

[244] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 120.

[245] Filer, "Ancient Egypt and Nubia as a Source of Information for Cranial Injuries," 61–63; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 121–24; Carola Vogel, "Fallen Heroes?: Winlock's 'Slain Soldiers' Reconsidered," *JEA* 89 (2003): 239–45; another group of bodies found at Kerma in Sudan from the Middle Kingdom revealed many injuries to their heads that might have been from warfare; see Filer, "Ancient Egypt and Nubia as a Source of Information for Cranial Injuries," 63–64.

[246] Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 204; for the relief, see Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 6; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:169; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 281.

[247] Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 54; the relief can be seen in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, pl. 168; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 263.

From reliefs, it appears that the standard dress for the troops was a kilt or loincloth.[249] Supply of clothes could also become a problem. A scribal parody in P.Lansing describes the soldier going on an expedition: "There are no clothes and no sandals."[250] The overseer of an expedition complained in a letter from Saqqara to the vizier about his command to bring his division to be fitted with clothes.

> The letter of the vizier has been brought to this your servant, to effect that the division of troops of Tura should be brought to the Western Enclosure so that they may be fitted with clothes in his presence. (However), this your servant protests at (such) unusual requests; for indeed the letter-carrier is about to come to Tura with the (stone) barge, while your servant has to spend six days at the Residence along with this division until it is clothed. It is (this) which gets in the way of your servant's work, since but one day needs to be wasted for the clothing of this division.[251]

Information about Egyptian camps can be found in a variety of records (mostly reliefs).[252] The account of Thutmose III refers to guards around the camp.[253] A relief from Horemhab depicts a military camp, including a chariot resting on a stand, a groom holding horses, a tent, and a donkey eating.[254] The most extensive picture of camp life is found in the reliefs of Ramesses II of the battle at Qadesh (fig. 6.6).[255] The rectangular camp

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[248] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 182.

[249] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 93–97.

[250] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 401; also *AEL* 2.172.

[251] Strudwick, *Texts from the Pyramid Age*, 177.

[252] For more on tents in Egypt, see James K. Hoffmeier, "Tents in Egypt and the Ancient Near East," *JSSEA* 7.3 (1977): 13–28; Michael M. Homan, *To Your Tents, O Israel! The Terminology, Function, Form, and Symbolism of Tents in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, CHANE 12 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 63–67.

[253] *COS* 2.2A:11.

[254] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 1:386; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 88.

[255] For the version found at Abu Simbel, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:236–37; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:169–70; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 6; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 281; the reliefs of the battle from the Ramesseum and Luxor also depict the camp; see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:81–82, 92; Breasted, *Battle of*

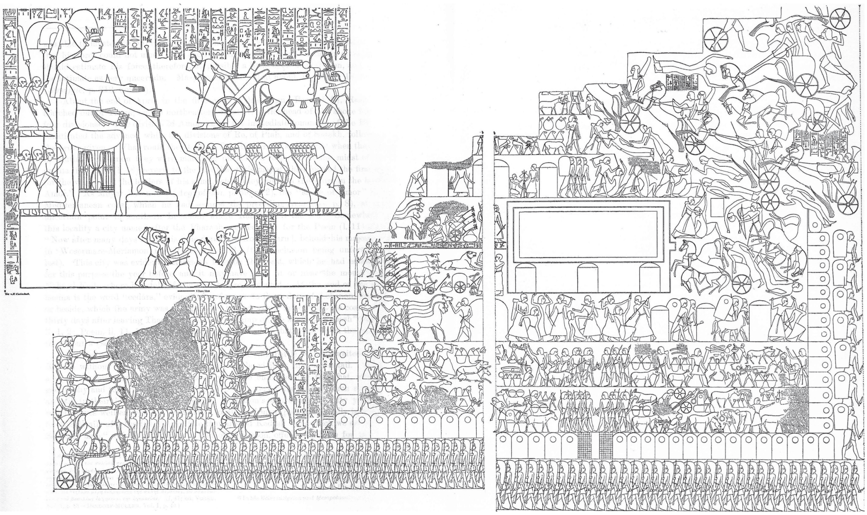

Fig. 6.6. Egyptian camp. Relief of Ramesses II at the Ramesseum. Line drawing from James Henry Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pl. 1.

was surrounded by a wall of shields that was easy to set up and would provide a small measure of defense in an emergency. The camp included places for horses, chariots, donkeys and oxen, as well as equipment for cooking and feeding the animals. Since the relief is part of the battle of Qadesh, it depicts the surprise attack by the Hittites against the Egyptians. The soldiers are doing a variety of activities in the reliefs, including caring for the animals, practicing fighting, and cooking. Based on later military data, Spalinger estimates that the Egyptian camps would have occupied ten acres per thousand troops.[256]

6.5.2. Hittite

Little is known about life on campaign for the Hittites soldiers. As noted in a previous chapter, plague seems to have been a particular problem for Hittite armies. The Deeds of Suppiluliuma recount how a plague broke out

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Kadesh, pls. 1, 4; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 287, 291; for commentary on these reliefs, see Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 105–6; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 87–88.

[256] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 87–88.

among the army behind the lines.[257] In the Plague Prayers of Mursili II (*CTH* 376–379), the Hittite king prays to the gods to take away the plague that had been brought to the Hittites by prisoners of war.[258] The Hittites sometimes wintered out in the field. Mursili II recorded that at the end of his third year he constructed a walled military camp at the Astarpa river, most likely to spend the winter.[259] The Hittite laws contain one reference to the death of a soldier, although it might be only a business trip rather than a military campaign. "If anyone hires a person, and that person goes on a military campaign and is killed, if the hire has been paid, there shall be no compensation. But if the hire has not been paid, the hirer shall give one slave."[260]

6.5.3. Early Mesopotamian

A letter from Bahdi-Adad provides an officer's view of how the soldiers thought about life on campaign. "The new group of Ḫaneens has arrived. There are no diseases, no losses, and the mission is well. Let my lord not be anxious. Further, when I observed all (previous) expeditions, there were many worries; but in this expedition, I observe no sorrow or anything (of that kind). Only laughter and mirth. They are happy, as if they are living at home. The heart of my lord's servant thinks only of fighting and killing the enemy."[261] Life on campaign sometimes afforded the occasional break. Ishme-Dagan released his men to go to their homes for two or three days before rejoining the campaign (ARM 1.5 = LAPO 17.517 = Sasson 3.4.b.i).

However, surely most campaigns were not this happy. The diviner Ashqudum reported to Zimri-Lim that the troops were suffering in Qattunan because of the cold (ARM 26.28).[262] A Sumerian lament records an early image of trauma due to a martial career: when "war veterans gave up, their brains were muddled."[263] A minimal amount of evidence remains for military medicine from the time.[264] A letter refers to the need for a physician in a military situation. "To my Lord say this: thus speaks Itûr-Asdu, thy servant. There is no physician, no mason. The wall is crumbling, and there is no one to rebuild it. And if a sling stone … wounds a man, there is not a single physician. If it please my lord, may my lord send me a physician and a mason."[265]

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[257] *COS* 1.74:189 (*CTH* 40); see also *ANEHST*, 236.

[258] *COS* 1.60:158; *ANET*, 394–96; Singer, *Hittite* Prayers, 48–56, 57–64; *ANEHST*, 261–66.

[259] *COS* 2.16:85–86 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[260] Roth, *Law Collections*, 223; text also in *COS* 2.19; *TLC* 1:265.

[261] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 36 (ARM 2.118 = LAPO 17.577 = Sasson 3.1.a.ii).

[262] Ashqudum also refers to the cold affecting the soldiers in ARM 26.18 = Sasson 6.3.a.v.note; ARM 26.29.

Few details have emerged about camps in early Mesopotamia. Naram-Sin said he "made firm the foundations of the *army camps*."[266] Although very few texts from the ancient Near East speak of it, most likely lower-class women followed armies on their campaign.[267] One text (identified as a comic morality tale by its translator) speaks of such women. "(Concerning) one female slave, Ḫalu-Bau by name, a manumitted slave: From Babylon and back, she has been expelled from the camp-followers, [rejected from] the troops, shunned by the people."[268]

Early Mesopotamian texts do not usually refer to friendly troops dying, though a few records from Ebla provide these numbers.[269] A sobering list from Nuzi contains the names of all the infantry lost in a battle, arranged by commanding officer. The last line reads as follows: "Total: 1 hundred 1 horseless men of the left (wing) to … (and) who did not come (back) from the town of Zizza."[270] A letter from Ibal-Adad, a vassal of Zimri-Lim, requested that his suzerain bury his troops who had died and release the rest to return home (ARM 28.77 = Sasson 1.5.a.i = *COS* 4.58:241). A ritual text from the Babylonian king Ammi-Saduqa lists those whose death care would be provided by the king, including the royal ancestors and soldiers who died in combat.[271]

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[263] Richardson, "Mesopotamia and the 'New' Military History," 45 (ETCSL 2.2.5).

[264] Gabriel and Metz, *History of Military Medicine*, 56–63.

[265] Guido Majno, *The Healing Hand: Man and Wound in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975), 66 (ARM 2.127 = LAPO 16.167).

[266] RIME 2:141, E2.1.4.30, 1.12'–14'.

[267] Amélie Kuhrt, "Women and War," *NIN* 2 (2001): 11–12.

[268] Martha T. Roth, "The Slave and the Scoundrel: CBS 10467, A Sumerian Morality Tale?," *JAOS* 103 (1983): 275 (CBS 10467).

[269] Archi, "Men at War in the Ebla Period," 32–33.

[270] Maidman, *Nuzi Texts and Their Use as Historical Evidence*, 60 (HSS XV, 40).

[271] Radner, "Fame and Prizes," 44 (BM 80328).

Mesopotamian texts were very concerned about what to do in the case of soldiers missing in action. A Sumerian letter documents the case of a soldier whose land was seized, perhaps because he was thought missing in action. “Thus says Luba, the sergeant: Tell His Majesty (or: Lugalmu) that Luzah (or: the runaway), the son of Azuzu, is serving in the army. Dada, the son of Nigar, has seized his estate, but he is to release it.”[272] The Laws of Eshnunna included one reference to the capture of a soldier and what should happen with his family. “If a man should be captured or abducted during a raiding expedition or while on patrol (?), even should he reside in a foreign land for a long time, should someone else marry his wife and even should she bear a child, whenever he returns he shall take back his wife.”[273]

An Old Babylonian treaty between Sumu-numhim of Shadlash and Ammi-dushur of Nerebtum, two kings near Eshnunna (about 1800), contained several regulations about soldiers.[274]

> A son of Šadlaš and its environs (or) a son of Neribtum and its environs who, prior to a war, for purposes of profit had gone (abroad) and was captured, he should *be set free*. A slave of a free man who prior to a war (had gone abroad) or who was smitten by a lion—they shall hold him captive and he shall return (home).… A soldier of Sumu-numḫim Ammi-dušur shall not enlist, a soldier of Ammi-dusšur Sumu-numḫim shall not enlist.[275]

The Laws of Hammurabi contain many laws that refer to military matters, especially to difficulties that individual soldiers faced. Several laws deal with the soldiers who were taken captive and the status of their fields. In particular, the focus of the laws is on performing the *ilku*-service (here translated “service obligation”). The following laws deal with the following situations: a captive soldier and someone else performs his *ilku*-service while he is gone (§27), a captive soldier and his son does the *ilku*-service (§28), a captive soldier whose son is too young to do the *ilku*-service (§29). Other laws deal with a soldier who abandons his *ilku*-service for three years and hence does not receive it back at that point (§30), a soldier who abandons his *ilku*-service for one year will receive his property back (§31), and a captive soldier who is redeemed by either his own wealth, that of the city temple, or the palace (§32).

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[272] Michalowski, *Letters from Early Mesopotamia*, 26.

[273] Roth, *Law Collections*, 63; also *COS* 2.130.

[274] For more on historical background, see *TLC* 2:28–29.

[275] Greengus, *Old Babylonian Tablets*, 75–77, no. 326; also *TLC* 1:207.

> §27 If there is either a soldier or a fisherman who is taken captive while serving in a royal fortress, and they give his field and his orchard to another to succeed to his holdings, and he then performs his service obligations—if he (the soldier or fisherman) should return and get back to his city, they shall return to him his field and orchard and he himself shall perform his service obligation.
> §28 If there is either a soldier or a fisherman who is taken captive while serving in a royal fortress, and his son is able to perform the service obligation, the field and orchard shall be given to him and he shall perform his father's service obligation.
> §29 If his son is too young and is unable to perform his father's service obligation, one third of the field and orchard shall be given to his mother, and his mother shall raise him.[276]

6.5.4. Assyrian

A letter from Nabu-taklak, an officer in Babylon, complained to a superior about conditions at the front, contrasting them with the luxurious situation of his superior Gadiyaʾ (whom he calls "brother"), before asking for help (SAA 17.63).

> As to what my brother wrote: "May you be in good spirits!" How could I be in good spirits! The enemy has pitched camp over against us, we [assemble] for fight [day and] night, and none of yo[u] has co[me] to my aid! I am not in good [spirits] at all! (But) really, you must be in good spirits yourself! You live in [your] lords' house, you eat bread and drink [*beer*] comfortably in [*the house of your lord*]![277]

Medical care in the field is only discussed rarely.[278] The body of an Assyrian soldier found at the Halzi Gate at Nineveh who was killed during the Babylonian attack in 612 had multiple wounds that had healed.[279] Many shields were large enough that they could have been used as stretchers, though we do not have direct evidence for the practice.[280] A treaty curse refers to what appears to be battlefield medicine: "When your enemy pierces you, may there be no honey, oil, ginger or cedar-resin available to place on your wound" (SAA 2.6 ll. 643–645).[281] Many diagnoses of trauma of various types have been found and could have been used on campaign.[282] A few of the diagnoses refer to shock, in which the patient "talks without knowing (what he is saying and) he gets up and sits down again."[283] JoAnn Scurlock and Burton Andersen refer to one group of diagnoses as Posttraumatic Stress Syndrome. "If his words are unintelligible and depression keeps falling on him at regular intervals (and he has been sick) for three days […]."[284] Finally, a group of diagnoses revolve around a dead person. In some cases, the cause of the problem is the ghost of a dead person: "If he chews on his arms, he had a person strangled to death and the 'double' of the dead person afflicts him."[285] In other cases, the victim sees a ghost. "If in the evening, he sees either a living person or a dead person or someone known to him or someone not ⌜known to him⌝ or anybody or anything and becomes afraid; he turns around but, like one who has [been hexed with?] rancid oil, his mouth is seized so that he is unable to cry out to one who sleeps next to him, 'hand' of ghost."[286] In at least some cases, these diagnoses must have been related to PTSD suffered by Assyrian soldiers.[287]

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[276] Roth, *Law Collections*, 85–87; see also *COS* 2.131:336; *ANET*, 163–80; *TLC* 1:121–23.

[277] For historical background of this letter, see Dubovský, *Hezekiah and the Assyrian Spies*, 92.

[278] Gabriel and Metz, *History of Military Medicine*, 95–101.

[279] Pickworth, "Excavations at Nineveh," 310.

A letter from Tiglath-pileser III to Assur-remanni (the governor of Calneh) and the scribe Nabu-bel-ahheshu reported that the cloaks for the soldiers were good. This last note might imply that the soldiers wore uniforms. "The clothes fo[r] the troops should be good but those [o]f the Itu'eans and the […] should be different."[288] A long list of textiles (perhaps from the time of Esarhaddon) includes references to clothes for troops (SAA 7.115). Regular items as part of the Assyrian uniforms included the kilt, the knee-length tunic, the shirt, and the mail-shirt.[289]

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[280] De Backer, *Neo-Assyrian Shield*, 3.

[281] Also in *COS* 4.36:166; for more on this, see JoAnn Scurlock and Burton R. Andersen, *Diagnoses in Assyrian and Babylonian Medicine: Ancient Sources, Translations, and Modern Medical Analyses* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 62.

[282] For these diagnoses, see ibid., 345–53.

[283] Ibid., 350 (14.26; DPS 15:13–14 = AOAT 43.15).

[284] Ibid., 351 (14.36, DPS 7 B r.8).

[285] Ibid., 438 (19.28, DPS 10 B r.6).

[286] Ibid., 439 (19.32, DPS 17:83–85).

[287] For more on PTSD in the ancient Near East, see M. Ben-Ezra, "Trauma in Antiquity: 4000 Year Old Post-traumatic Reactions?," *Stress and Health* 20 (2004): 121–25; Ben-Ezra, "Traumatic Reactions from Antiquity to the 16th Century: Was There a Common Denominator?," *Stress and Health* 26 (2010); W. K. Abdul-Hamid and J. H. Hughes, "Nothing New Under the Sun: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders in the Ancient World," *EarlyScMed* 19 (2014): 549–57.

References to the death of Assyrian soldiers were mostly avoided in Assyrian texts. An astrological report (probably to Esarhaddon) relates how defeat results in dead warriors. "[If Mars] becomes visible in Tammuz (IV): the cemetery of the warriors will enlarge."[290] Sargon II instructed a subordinate to gather the names of the widows of fallen soldiers (SAA 1.21).

> …] your […], [enqui]re and investigate, [and write down] and dispatch to me [the names] of the [sol]diers killed and their [sons and d]aughters. Perhaps there is a man who has subjugated a widow as his slave girl, or has subjugated a son or a daughter to servitude. Enquire and investigate, and bring (him/them) forth.
>
> Perhaps there is a son who has gone into conscription in the place of his father; this alone do not write down. But be sure to enquire and find out all the widows, write them down, define (their status) and send them to me.

The question of how the Assyrian soldiers overcame the fear of death in battle is unknown. The hope of a reward in the afterlife is not attested. Liverani suggests that the documents highlighting the death of enemy troops while passing over the death of friendly troops leads to the belief that only the enemy will die, encouraging the troops to fight bravely in battle. Rituals done before battle and the promised help of the gods also supported the troops against this fear of death.[291] Perhaps the Assyrian soldiers also overcame the guilt complex of killing enemies by means of declaring the enemy to be less than human or utterly evil: their death has been ordained by the gods as a punishment and the Assyrian soldiers are simply the hand of the gods against the enemy.[292]

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[288] SAA 19.6 = ND 2735; also Saggs, *Nimrud Letters, 1952*, 305.

[289] J. N. Postgate, "Assyrian Uniforms," in *Veenhof Anniversay Volume: Studies Presented to Klaas R. Veenhof on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. W. H. van Soldt, PIHANS 89 (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2001), 373–88; Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 68–70.

[290] SAA 8:72–73, 114.2.

[291] Liverani, "King and His Audience," 381–82.

The Middle Assyrian Laws provide guidance for the families of captive soldiers.

> If a woman is given in marriage and the enemy then takes her husband prisoner, and she has neither father-in-law nor son (to support her), she shall remain (the exclusive object of rights) for her husband for two years. During these two years, if she has no provisions, she shall come forward and so declare. If she is a resident of the community dependent upon the palace, her [father (?)] shall provide for her and she shall do work for him. If she is a wife of a *ḫupšu*-soldier, […] shall provide for her [and she shall do work for him]. But [if she is a wife of a man (?) whose] field and [house are not sufficient to support her (?)], she shall come forward and declare before the judges, "[I have nothing] to eat"; the judges shall question the mayor and the noblemen of the city to determine the current market rate (?) of a field in that city; they shall assign and give the field and house for her, for her provisions for two years; she shall be resident (in that house), and they shall write a tablet for her (permitting her to stay for the two years). She shall allow two full years to pass, and then she may go to reside with the husband of her own choice; they shall write a tablet for her as if for a widow. If later her lost husband should return to the country, he shall take back his wife who married outside the family; he shall have no claim to the sons she bore to her later husband, it is her later husband who shall take them. As for the field and house that she gave for full price outside the family for her provisioning, if it is not entered into the royal holdings (?), he shall give as much as was given, and he shall take it back. But if he should not return but dies in another country, the king shall give his field and house wherever he chooses to give.[293]

Many letters and reliefs provide information about Assyrian camps.[294] The best places for a camp were apparently those with grass on a plain

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[292] Ibid., 382–83.

[293] Roth, *Law Collections*, 170–71 (A 45); also *TLC* 1:673–75; for a study of this text, see Daniel Bodi, "The 'Widow's Tablet' for the Wife of an Assyrian War Prisoner and the Rabbinic 'Divorce Letter' of the Hebrew Warriors," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 123–32.

[294] For more on Assyrian camps (and pictures of many of the reliefs), see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:292–93; Homan, *To Your Tents, O Israel!*, 68–69; M. G. Micale and D. Nadali, "The Shape of Sennacherib's Camps: Strategic Functions and

(SAA 1.13). Another letter refers to taking a camp across a river to a place where there is much room (SAA 1.47). Assurnasirpal recorded for one campaign that he made a new camp every night for a week.[295] The camps appear to have been rather large. One story concerning the Urartian camp details how part of the camp did not see their king escape alive, so assuming he was dead they appointed his son king on the spot (SAA 5.90). A very fragmentary letter refers to the guard of the camp and the wall of the camp (SAA 5.160), while Sargon II refers to not fortifying his camp when he was in a hurry, indicating that usually the Assyrian camps had some kind of fortification. The fortifications appear to have been left in place, as one letter commands an Assyrian leader to stay in the wall of the camp of Babylon that had been used the year before (SAA 18.175).[296]

Many reliefs provide us with pictures of the Assyrian camps during military campaigns (figs. 6.7 and 6.8).[297] The reliefs indicate that two perpendicular roads were present in the camps, meeting at the middle. The common soldiers stayed in temporary tents that sometimes did not survive in inclement weather. "On the night of the 4th day an extremely strong wind was bl[owing]. The sto[rm] was so (strong) it tor[e off] all the tents; people got panicked, horses piled together making a heap" (SAA 5.249).[298]

One drawing of a now-lost relief provides a good picture of an Assyrian camp. The camp is surrounded by a large wall, with two gates on either side. A line divides the camp into two (either a road or a wall). One half of the camp contains a large tent and a several priests making a sacrifice.[299]

Ideological Space," *Iraq* 66 (2004): 163–75; Fales and Rigo, "Everyday Life and Food Practices."

[295] RIMA 2:258–59, A.0.101.19, 40–63; see discussion in Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 137.

[296] For more on these temporary fortifications, see Fales and Rigo, "Everyday Life and Food Practices," 415–17.

[297] For reliefs of Assyrian camps, see *ANEP*, 52, 125, nos. 170 (Berlin VA 965), 171 (Baghdad IM 31065), 361 (Band 3 of Balawat Gates); Berlin VA 965 = Or.Dr.V.26 can also be found in Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 66; band 3 of the Balawat Gates can be found in King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 18. For more examples from Sennacherib, see Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 35, no. 26 (Or.Dr.IV.5); 138, no. 200 (Or.Dr.I.38); 346–48, nos. 438–39 (Or.Dr.I.62 = BM 124914–15); 402, no. 515 (Or.Dr.VI.16).

[298] For more on these tents (and the royal tent), see Fales and Rigo, "Everyday Life and Food Practices," 417–19.

[299] Micale and Nadali, "Shape of Sennacherib's Camps," 165–66; for a ritual done

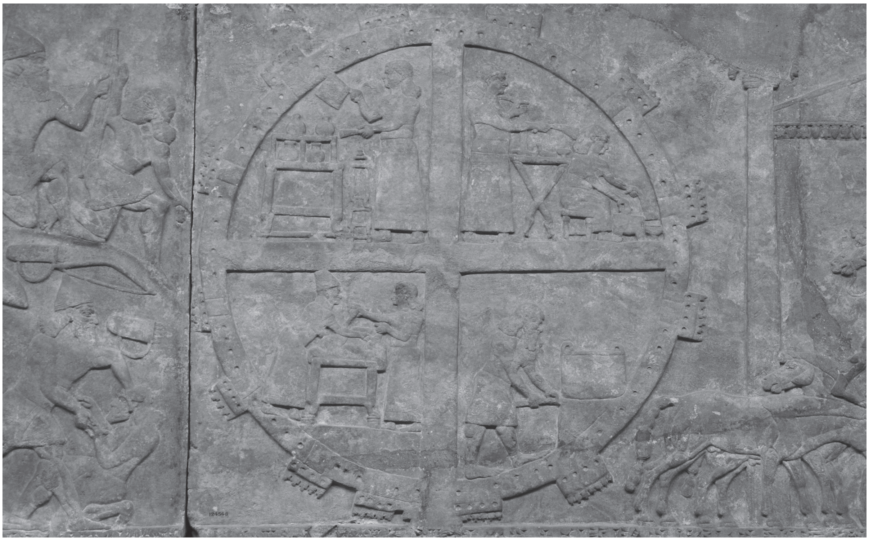

Fig. 6.7. Camp of Assurnasirpal II. BM 124548. Photo courtesy of Gtoffoletto, Wikimedia Commons.

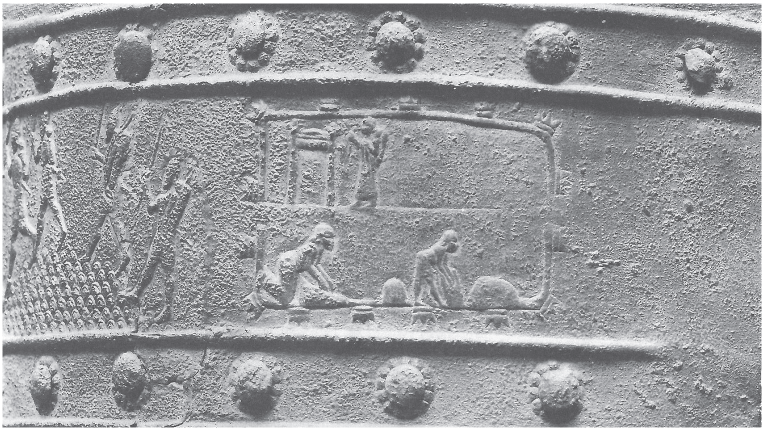

Fig. 6.8. Camp of Shalmaneser III. Band 1 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 6.

The other half of the camp includes two tents and an open area; in one tent a man makes a bed while in the other tent a servant provides food at a table

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in the camp, see Deller, "Neuassyrische Rituale für den Einsatz der Götterstreitwagen."

for a seated individual and another servant waves a fan behind him. A man with a sack approaches a pot in the open area.[300]

A relief from Sennacherib with a camp shows the top half of the camp occupied by the king's large tent and his attendants; the bottom half consists of the smaller tents of the common soldiers who are engaged in various duties in their tents (cooking, making beds, etc.).[301] Another well-preserved example from Sennacherib's conquest of Lachish shows a priest performing a ritual in the top left quadrant. A solitary tent next to an open area is in the top right quadrant, and the bottom half of the camp is taken up with six tents filled with men and animals.[302] A relief from Assurbanipal shows an armed soldier entering his tent, where an unarmed servant gives him a drink while another servant makes his bed.[303]

6.5.5. Later Empires

Few references to friendly casualties are found among the Babylonian and Persian records. One of the casualty figures in the Bisitun Inscription of Darius ascribes the casualties to the Persians, but most likely this is an error.[304] According to Xenophon, Cyrus's father advised him about the best way to avoid sickness among his soldiers, including choosing a sanitary location for the camp, providing a good diet for the soldiers, and encouraging them to exercise (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 1.6.16–18). Xenophon also recorded that Cyrus not only traveled with surgeons on campaign (*Cyr.* 5.4.18) and material to help those who are sick (*Cyr.* 6.2.32), but also in one campaign he set his first camp close to home so anyone who forgot anything could quickly return to acquire it (*Cyr.* 6.3.1). The classical sources provide extensive descriptions of the Persian camp, especially the royal tent in the middle of the camp whose luxury amazed the Greeks who saw it.[305] This description of Cyrus's camp is from Xenophon.

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[300] Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 60 (Or.Dr.I.14).

[301] Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pl. 138, no. 200 (Or.Dr.I.38).

[302] Ibid., pls. 346–48, nos. 438–39 (Or.Dr.I.61 = BM 124914–124915).

[303] *ANEP*, 52, no. 170 (Berlin VA 965); Marriott and Radner, "Sustaining the Assyrian Army," 136; Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 46.

[304] Hyland, "Casualty Figures in Darius' Bisitun Inscription," 178.

[305] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 256–58; Homan, *To Your Tents, O Israel!*, 71–73.

> 8. Accordingly, he himself first took up his position in the middle of the camp in the belief that this situation was the most secure. Then came his most trusty followers, just as he was accustomed to have them about him at home, and next to them in a circle he had his horsemen and charioteers;
> 9. for those troops also, he thought, need a secure position, because when they are in camp they do not have ready at hand any of the arms with which they fight, but need considerable time to arm, if they are to render effective service.
> 10. To the right and left from him and the cavalry was the place for the targeteers; before and behind him and the cavalry, the place for the bowmen.
> 11. The hoplites and those armed with the large shields he arranged around all the rest like a wall, so that those who could best hold their ground might, by being in front of them, make it possible for the cavalry to arm in safety, if it should be necessary.
> 12. Moreover, he had the peltasts and the bowmen sleep on their arms, like the hoplites, in order that, if there should be occasion to go into action even at night, they might be ready for it. And just as the hoplites were prepared to do battle if any one came within arm's reach of them, so these troops also were to be ready to let fly their lances and arrows over the heads of the hoplites, if any one attacked.
> 13. And all the officers had banners over their tents; and just as in the cities well-informed officials know the residences of most of the inhabitants and especially those of the most prominent citizens, so also in camp the aides under Cyrus were acquainted with the location of the various officers and were familiar with the banner of each one; and so if Cyrus wanted one of his officers, they did not have to search for him but would run to him by the shortest way. (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.5.8–13 [Miller, LCL]).

6.5.6. West Semitic

One Old Testament story refers to the kings drinking in their tents (סכה) while besieging a city, getting drunk at noon (1 Kgs 20:12, 16). The lepers in Samaria who went to surrender to the besieging Arameans found an empty camp and entered into various tents to take food and valuables (2 Kgs 7:3–8).[306]

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[306] For more on tents in military contexts in Israel, see Homan, *To Your Tents, O Israel!*, 74–78.

The Old Testament describes a few battlefield wounds. Many of them led to death, such as that of Ahab (1 Kgs 22:34–35), but others survived, such as Joram (2 Kgs 8:28–29). Although the interpretation has not received widespread support, a few scholars suggest that Goliath suffered from eye problems.[307] Victor Hurowitz argues that the task of the arms bearer (נושא כלים) was to follow after a warrior and kill those enemies who had been injured, partly to ensure that they would not be able to rejoin battle and also as an act of mercy.[308] A large group of bodies was found outside Lachish that might have been the result of the Assyrian attack on the city; three of the skulls showed marks of surgery that might have be examples of battlefield medicine.[309] This group of bodies also includes children, illustrating the deadly effects of a siege on the general populace.[310] A letter from Ugarit describes a plague, most likely in a military context. "Pestilence [*yd ʾilm*] is (at work) here, for death is very strong."[311] Several of the martial laws in the Old Testament, such as the command to bury excrement (Deut 23:12–14), might relate to hygienic purposes.[312] The abundance of the command not to fear in martial contexts in the Old Testament most likely indicates that many would have been fearful before battle.[313]

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[307] Vladimir M. Berginer and Chaim Cohen, "The Nature of Goliath's Visual Disorder and the Actual Role of His Personal Bodyguard: נשא הצנה (I Sam 17:7, 41)," *ANES* 43 (2006): 27–44.

[308] Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, "The Biblical Arms Bearer (נושא כלים)," in *"Up to the Gates of Ekron": Essays on the Archaeology and History of the Eastern Mediterranean in Honor of Seymour Gitin*, ed. Sidnie White Crawford et al. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2007), 344–49.

[309] Ussishkin, *Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*, 56–58.

[310] For a survey of the effect of warfare on children (mostly based on burials and reliefs), see Rona S. Avissar-Lewis, "Childhood and Children in the Material Culture of the Land of Israel from the Middle Bronze Age to the Iron Age" [Hebrew] (PhD diss., Bar-Ilan University, 2010), 147–52.

[311] *COS* 3.45BB:108 (RS 4.475).

[312] Gabriel and Metz, *History of Military Medicine*, 112–14.

[313] For a study of this phrase (which was also used in nonmartial contexts), see Martti Nissinen, "Fear Not: A Study on an Ancient Near Eastern Phrase," in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 122–61.

6.6. Problematic Soldiers

> Seize and summarily execute any deserters to stop the others from looking about [to desert]. Shout in order to lead them. If they are too terrified of the enemy, do not threaten them with execution and severe punishments but display a magnanimous countenance. Speak to them about what they have to live for; supervise them in their duties.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 4

> When orders are annoying they will be ignored.
>
> —The Methods of Ssu-Ma 4

This final section on ordinary soldiers will examine the problematic soldiers who caused sleepless nights for their superiors (problematic officers were already studied in the section on command structure). Primarily this was through desertion, but soldiers could also act in a variety of other ways to torment their officers.

6.6.1. Egyptian

A scribal parody of the life of a soldier in P.Lansing includes a reference to the possible punishment of a soldier's family if he deserted: "He is fled and gone away amongst the deserters, whilst all his folk are confined in jail. Now he is dead upon the desert-edges, and there is no one to perpetuate his name."[314] The author of P.Anast. 1 negatively portrays the life of a soldier in the chariotry, including the possibility of desertion of a companion. "Your groom awoke during the night and realized what he must do. He has taken what was left and has joined up with those who are wicked. He consorts with the Shasu-Beduin tribes and assumes the guise of an Asiatic."[315] A letter from a scribe to his lord (a scribe of the treasury) records how one man went missing to avoid being recruited: "I have not seen him (again) until today, on account of the ones who are drafting infantrymen. He ran away from the house of Nebet-Hotep."[316] The role of a woman as a temptress is emphasized in the scribal condemnation of life in the chariotry by the author of P.Anast. 1.

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[314] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 402; for other translations, see *AEL* 2.172; Schulman, *Military Rank*, 108, no. 128.

[315] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 107.

[316] Schulman, *Military Rank*, 104, no. 108 (P.Anast. 6, 41–42); also Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 282.

> You have now entered Joppa and find the meadowland verdant in its season. You force your way in because of appetite and encounter the beautiful maiden who is tending the vineyards. She allures you to herself to be a partner (in love) and surrenders to you the flesh of her bosom. You are recognized as soon as you have uttered advice. So judgment is rendered against a Maher-warrior, and you must sell your tunic of fine thin linen.[317]

A letter from Elephantine to the governor of Judah (in the Persian period) describes the destruction and plundering of the Jewish temple by Egyptian troops, an action that went against the desires of the Persian authorities (or so the letter writers claimed).[318] The Edict of Horemheb, one of the longest examples of law from Egypt, includes a section prohibiting soldiers from unofficial plundering.

> [Further] the two corps of the army, when they are in the field—one in the southern district and the other in the northern district—have been appropriating hides throughout the entire land, without ceasing for a single year in order to let [the people] breathe…; [and they seize the hides without] distinguishing the brands on them, and after going from house to house, with beatings and duckings, not leaving a single hide for [anyone],…. And when [the overseer of the cattle] of Pharaoh, l.p.h., goes [to] perform [the cattle-count in the] entire [land], and he …, no hide is found with them, so that they can be accused of defaulting even as they fill their hearts by saying, "they have been taken from us!"—This is an instance of cravenness: one should not [behave in] this fashion!
>
> When the overseer of the cattle of Pharaoh, l.p.h., goes to perform the cattle-count in the entire land, he is the one who shall bring the hides of the dead animals which are upon [the … in] his usual fashion. And as for any member of the army about whom it will be heard that he goes and still appropriates hides [until] today, let the law be applied against him by beating him with one hundred blows and five open wounds, and by confiscating the hide he has taken by theft.[319]

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[317] Wente, *Letters from Ancient Egypt*, 108.

[318] *COS* 3.51:126–27.

[319] Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, 237; also *ARE* 3.49–66.

Seti I issued the Nauri Decree to ensure the protection of workers at Abydos who were building his funerary temple. The document called for severe punishments of those who committed various crimes; in some cases, military personnel are explicitly warned not to use their power over the workers.

> Likewise any charioteer, any stable-chief, (or) any (⌜other⌝) person belonging to the King's Estate sent on any mission of Pharaoh who shall take any person belonging to the Foundation from (one) district for (another) district by ⌜corvée (or?) by forced labor⌝ for plowing (or) ⌜by forced labor⌝ for harvesting, likewise to do any task, punishment shall be done to him by beating him with two hundred blows (and) five pierced wounds, together with exacting the work of the person belonging to the Foundation from him for every day that he shall spend with him, to be given to the Foundation.[320]

A letter from the standard-bearer Mai-Sutekhi to a group of garrison commanders in the north (during the reign of Seti I) thoroughly rebuked them for their activities.

> I have heard that you have interfered with the personnel of the god in the Isle of Amun under the authority of the Royal Scribe Iuny. What's the meaning of your doing such a thing? (Truly), as Amun endures and the Ruler, [LPH], endures—if (I) hear that you are interfering any more with the personnel of the god who are <in> your district(s), (then) see, I shall get you into real troubles, for your sakes! The notables of Pharaoh, LPH, are making great trouble for me!
>
> So, you shall perform your duties properly. Do not be slack about this letter which I have put into your hands. As for everything which is in this letter, do not ignore it; but you shall bring for us people that are released, as what belong to those not due for punishment(?); and you shall not go messing about in this place of importance(?), but you shall come <before> I get <to> you!
>
> When this document reaches you, you shall not allow work for the god to lie dormant, and that you be jailed! So, take note of it![321]

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[320] William F. Edgerton, "The Nauri Decree of Seti I: A Translation and Analysis of the Legal Portion," *JNES* 6 (1947): 222–23; also "Abydos Decree of Sethos I at Nauri, Year 4," *RITA* 1.Seti I.24:46.

[321] "Papyrus Cairo CGC 58053," *RITA* 1.Seti I.130:261–62.

6.6.2. Hittite

Tudhaliya I ordered that, "If an officer or an infantry soldier flees [(from a campaign)], his commander and his *clan* must not conceal him. He must reveal [(him)] in the [(palace) im]mediately."[322] Another text (perhaps also from Tudhaliya I) prescribed a harsh penalty for those who flee battle.

> Whoever [*runs*] from a crucial [(ca)mpa]ign, thou[(gh)], whether My Majesty and the army are […] in e[nemy] land, but they [ha]ve already found the enemy, [*he w*(*ho*)] runs from the army, or [his] first officer [le]ts him [get away], then they shall surely die! Whoever hide[s] him, rather than [denou]nce him, whether he's a clan chief or even if he's a commander, then let [(these o)]ath gods [(gr)a]b h[im], and let t[hem destroy] him along with his wife and his sons![323]

6.6.3. Early Mesopotamian

Several tablets relating to Ubarum, a soldier who lived during the reign of the Babylonian king Abi-eshuh (around 1700), reveal the problems he encountered hiring others to farm his fields for him while he was fighting battles.[324] In the Laws of Hammurabi soldiers who refused to go on campaign or hired someone else to do so were punished (§26). The law even included an incentive to inform on a neighbor breaking the law: "If either a soldier or a fisherman who is ordered to go on a royal campaign does not go, or hires and sends a hireling as his substitute, that soldier or fisherman shall be killed; the one who informs against him shall take full legal possession of his estate."[325] Likewise, if an officer recruited a person they should not for military service, they would be punished (§33). "If either a captain or a sergeant should recruit(?) deserters or accepts and leads off a hireling as a substitute on a royal campaign, that captain or sergeant shall be killed."[326] A letter writer from Mari was accused by his superior of not reporting complaints from the troops, but he defended himself by denying several specific examples of negative behavior by the soldiers

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[322] Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 148–49, §7 (*CTH* 259).

[323] Ibid., 170–71, §6 (*CTH* 251); §13 is also very similar.

[324] Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 95–96.

[325] Roth, *Law Collections*, 85–86; see also *COS* 2.131:336; *ANET*, 163–80; *TLC* 121–23.

[326] Roth, *Law Collections*, 87.

(A.3976 = LAPO 17.676): "Voilà ce que mon Seigneur m'avait écrit. À présent, lorsqu'ils sont rassemblés, ils n'ont pas parlé, l'un avec l'autre, de leur libération. Jamais, lors du rassemblement, ils ne se plaignent à moi, ni ne *transgressent leurs serments* et je n'ai entendu nulle plainte de leur part. L'un avec l'autre, lorsqu'ils sont rassemblés, on ne les entend pas, etc."[327]

A soldier could not receive any land he liked. Hammurabi rebuked Shamash-kazir for taking a field away from its owner to give to a soldier. "Sin-ishmeanni from Kutalla, a date-palm gardener informed me: 'Shamash-hazir took away the field of my family and gave it to a soldier.' That is what he brought to my attention. Is a field under long-term tenancy ever taken away? Take care of this case. If this field is indeed of his family, give it back to Sin-ishmeanni."[328] A group of soldiers from Mari complained about not getting paid in silver, but the official Hammi-shagish rebuked them and told them to be content with their food, oil, and beer provisions (A.731 = Sasson 3.3a.iv.3).

Desertion was reported in the Mari letters. Bahdi-Lim wrote to Zimri-Lim that it had been reported to him by the general of the king of Yamhad that four men had deserted. He requested that the king command Kibri-Dagan (of Terqa) and Yaqqim-Adad (of Saggaratum) to catch these four men and return them in shackles (ARM 6.35 = LAPO 17.569 = Sasson 3.4.d.i).[329] In a letter to Zimri-Lim, Yatarum sought to exact a punishment against a soldier who deserted the army. "If [(my lord?) does not arrest(?)] the one who takes leave (of his troop), the life of the Ḫana will take leave (as well). He will break the fortune(?) of the Hana. Now then, Lawasum, the Yumaḫammû , has taken leave. His *šugāgum* is Dadi-[Lim], and his property consists of 200 sheep and five donkeys. My lord should confiscate (this)."[330]

6.6.4. Assyrian

One letter writer complained to an overseer about the disorderly troops in Calah. During the reign of Sargon II (SAA 1.154): "The [troops] who a[rrived …] and have been resid[ent] in […] are loitering in the centre of Calah with their riding horses like […] common criminals and drunkards. What does my lord say? [Let my lord quickly send an answ]er to my letter!" Nergal-ballit grumbled to Sargon II about the Philistine cohort formed by the king who refused to stay with him but went to another village (SAA 1.155).

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[327] Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 413.

[328] Mieroop, *King Hammurabi*, 94 (*AbB* 4.16).

[329] For more on deserters, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 47.

[330] Fleming, *Democracy's Ancient Ancestors*, 50 (FM 3.136).

Desertion is usually discussed in the context of enemy troops deserting to the Assyrians, but a few of the letters refer to Assyrian desertions.[331] Abi-yaqiya reported to Sargon II that a man named Natannu had fled to Elam, and many soldiers were fleeing with him; Abi-yaqiya requested that the king command his soldiers not to flee (SAA 17.149). Another letter describes a group of village managers who had not reported to the muster (SAA 13.107). A serious case involved Hu-Teshub, the king of Shubria, who accepted Assyrian deserters and provided for them in his country. Hu-Teshub sent a list of names of these deserters, but continued to care for them (SAA 5.52). Officials might have been required to send yearly updates on the number of deserters (SAA 15.294).

6.6.5. Later Empires

Although the Babylonians and the Persians surely had difficulties with their soldiers, little attention is paid to the problem in extant texts.

6.6.6. West Semitic

In one of the letters recovered from Lachish Hoshaʿyahu wrote to his commander Yaush concerning weakening of morale among his troops. "And behold, the words of the [officers] are not good; to weaken your hands [and to in]hibit the hands of the m[en]."[332] Another Lachish letter refers to a decline in morale caused by a report, but the details are unclear.[333] A few references to desertion are found in the Old Testament, such as those who fled Jerusalem to desert to Nebuchadnezzar II (2 Kgs 25:11).

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[331] For more on Assyrians deserting, see Malbran-Labat, *Armée et l'organisation militaire de l'Assyrie*, 106–11; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (2): Recruitment and Logistics*, 51–53.

[332] Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 80 (Lachish 6); also *COS* 3.42E; *ANEHST*, 401–2.

[333] *COS* 3.42F (Lachish 9).

7
Weapons and Armor

From the perspective of the warriors, the weapons and armor that they used in battle were one of the most important parts of warfare. In contrast to other parts of this book, texts provide us with little guidance about this area; instead, archaeology and reliefs are the best ways to learn what individual soldiers used in the battlefield.[1] This section arranges the discussion into three areas: hand-to-hand weapons, distance weapons, and defensive equipment.[2]

7.1. Hand-to-Hand Weapons

> The implements for offense and defense are fully found in ordinary human activity.
>
> —T'ai Kung, *Six Secret Teachings* 30[3]

Hand-to-hand weapons are those that warriors could use when physically next to their opponent. They can be divided into three broad categories: bludgeoning weapons (clubs and maces), slashing weapons (curved swords and axes), and piercing weapons (spears and straight swords). In general, maces and axes were the most popular weapons in early time periods, but they were later surpassed by the rise of the sword.[4] Spears remained popular throughout the entire time frame.

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[1] However, for a critique of the uncritical use of the Assyrian reliefs concerning weapons and armor, see Amy E. Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour: Art versus Artifact" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2010).

[2] For surveys of the topic, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*; Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 47–79; Seth M. Rodriquez, "The Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings and Their Neighbors: A Description of Biblical Weapons in the Iron Age" (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2010); Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*.

[3] T'ai Kung goes on to provide many examples, such as hoes serving as spears, umbrellas as shields, and chickens and dogs as lookouts; however, in the following section (§31), he provides a long list of military equipment, most of which does not sound like it could readily be used for peacetime activities.

7.1.1. Egypt

According to their frequent appearance in reliefs and paintings of the Middle and New Kingdom, spears appear to be one of the most popular hand-to-hand weapons of the time.[5] The Tomb of Mesehti contained model spearmen from the Eleventh Dynasty (fig. 7.1).[6] Spears were made with a wooden shaft and a metal tip (copper, bronze, or iron).[7] Although spears could be thrown long distances, they were most likely more often used in hand-to-hand combat, since each soldier only carried one. Spears could be held either overhand, which allowed the user greater acceleration, or underhand, which increased the vulnerable target areas of their opponent. Spears worked best when infantry were densely combined together, which limited their maneuverability. Spears do not appear to be very useful against armor because of the force needed to penetrate it.[8]

The other most common weapon depicted in New Kingdom reliefs was the battle-axe. The handle of the axe was made out of wood, while the axe head was made out of stone in early times and metal (such as copper or bronze) throughout most of Egyptian history. Axes during the Old and Middle Kingdom had broader blades that were effective against lightly armored enemies, but as armor increased the axes changed to a narrower and longer design that was more effective against armor.[9] One pharaoh,

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[4] For more on swords, see R. Maxwell-Hyslop, "Daggers and Swords in Western Asia: A Study from Prehistoric Times to 600 B.C.," *Iraq* 8 (1946): 1–65; Herbert Maryon et al., "Early Near Eastern Steel Swords," *AJA* 65 (1961): 173–84.

[5] For examples from reliefs of the Middle Kingdom, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:7, 9, 15; for the New Kingdom, spears are ubiquitous in the reliefs.

[6] *ANEP*, 55, no. 180 (Cairo Museum).

[7] On Egyptian spears, see Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 37–39; Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, 58–63; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 45–47; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 120.

[8] Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 59–60.

[9] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:43–44, 59, 77–78; Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 60–63; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 47–49; Gilbert, *Weapons,*

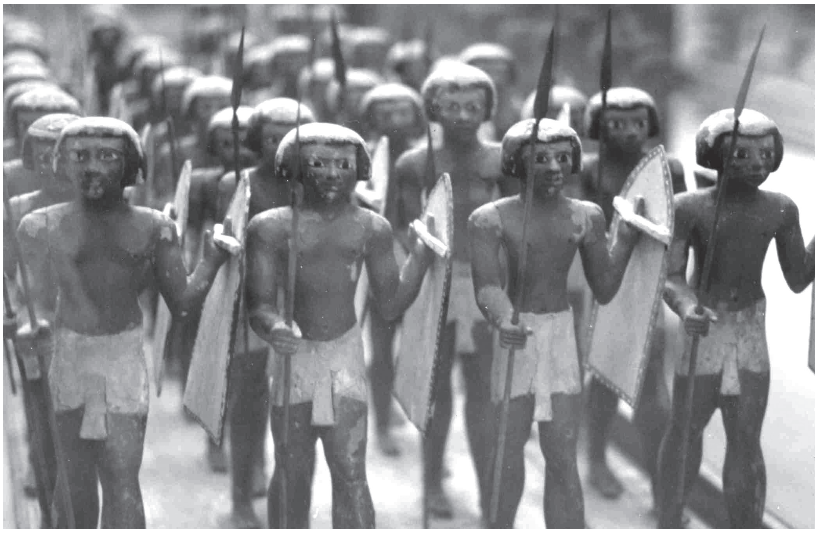

Fig. 7.1. Spearmen from the tomb of Mesehti. Cairo Museum. Photo courtesy of Udimu, Wikimedia Commons.

Seqenenre-Tao II, received axe wounds in his head that can be clearly seen today (fig. 7.2). Since axes were only used in the Ramesses III reliefs for cutting trees and hitting a door, the axe appears to have been fading from use in the later New Kingdom.[10]

The mace was a standard weapon in Egypt through all periods and consisted of connecting a heavy stone to a wooden handle.[11] Pharaohs commonly portrayed themselves using a mace against their enemies.[12] However, it appears to be no longer extensively used by the time of the New Kingdom, perhaps because more soldiers began to use helmets.[13] Modern

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Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt, 63–68; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 75–76; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 120; see the pictures of these different kinds of axe designs in Gabriel and Metz, Partridge, and Seevers.

[10] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 85–86.

[11] On maces in early Egypt, see Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, 35–41.

[12] E.g., see the statue of Tutankhamen carrying a mace found in his tomb (today in the Cairo Egyptian Museum) in Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 34.

[13] Ibid., 32–34; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 120; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 74–75; however, a few Egyptian troops are still depicted with a type of club or mace in the reliefs of Ramesses III; see Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 111–12.

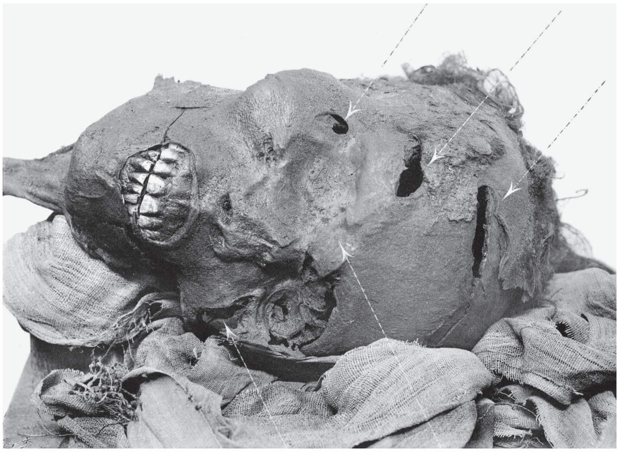

Fig. 7.2. Mummy of Sequenre Tao with axe wound. Cairo Museum. Photo from G. Elliot Smith, *The Royal Mummies*, pl. 2.

studies indicate that a mace weighing just under two pounds could cause a fracture in a human head, but a helmet drastically reduced the effectiveness of a mace by spreading the shock over more area of the head.[14]

Although swords are the most famous hand-to-hand weapon in the Western world, they were less common in the ancient Near East.[15] One reason for this is that they were more difficult to construct, as the entire blade needed to be of metal rather than simply attaching a head to a piece of wood (as was done with a mace or an axe). The most common sword in Egypt was the sickle-sword (*khopesh* sword), which looked like a harvesting sickle (somewhat like a scimitar) and was used during the Middle and New Kingdom (fig. 7.3).[16] However, the outer edge rather than the inner edge was sharpened for slashing their enemy. They tended to be rather short, which would limit usefulness. It could also not be used for piercing and would have been impossible to sheath. The use of swords also requires a more open battle formation (to allow individual swordsmen room to act) than that which was employed by spearmen.[17] In the New Kingdom, pharaohs began to portray themselves smiting their enemies with a *khopesh* instead of a mace (fig. 7.4). A relief from Ramesses III depicts his soldiers being equipped with swords (and other weapons) as part of the preparation for a campaign.[18] The straight long sword came into prominent use around 1200 BCE, perhaps as a result of the use of the sword by the Sea People and Libyans during the reign of Ramesses III. The long sword proved to be more effective than the sickle sword and quickly surpassed it.[19] Other short-range weapons include small knives for stabbing and metal rods for hitting their enemies.[20]

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[14] Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 57.

[15] For more on swords, see Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 192–208; Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 50–51; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 76–77; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 121.

[16] For a recent study, see Carola Vogel, "Icon of Propaganda and Lethal Weapon: Further Remarks on the Late Bronze Age Sickle Sword," in O'Brien, *Warfare and Society*, 71–87; for examples from the Middle Kingdom, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:7, 8.

7.1.2. Hittite

Unfortunately, details about the specific weapons used by the Hittites are minimal, as weapons were usually discussed in general terms. For example, Himmuili wrote to Huilli (probably his superior) and requested more weapons that had not been sent earlier. "I am angry with you! Now my messenger Šanda is about to come (again to you); so send me quivers and good weapons, my dear brother!"[21] Since the Egyptian reliefs portray Hittite soldiers with spears, they were most likely their main weapon.[22] The titles for the guards also frequently refer to spears.[23] Axes have also been

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[17] Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 64–66.

[18] Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pl. 29; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:110; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 305; for a discussion about whether weapons were privately-or state-owned, see Focke, "'His Majesty Saw My Valour,'" 13–15.

[19] Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 192–208.

[20] For small knives, see Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 49–51; an iron dagger from the tomb of Tutankhamen has been determined to have a meteoritic origin; see Daniela Comelli et al., "The Meteoritic Origin of Tutankhamun's Iron Dagger Blade," *Meteoritics & Planetary Science* 51 (2016): 1301–9. For metal rods, see Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 121; Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 195–96.

[21] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 203 (*HKM* 56; *CTH* 190).

[22] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 200–201; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 136–37; for a Neo-Hittite relief from Zinkirli depicting a Hittite soldier (possible a deity) holding a spear, see *ANEP*, 13, no. 36 (Berlin VA 2647).

[23] E.g., see Miller, *Royal Hittite Instructions*, 98–121.

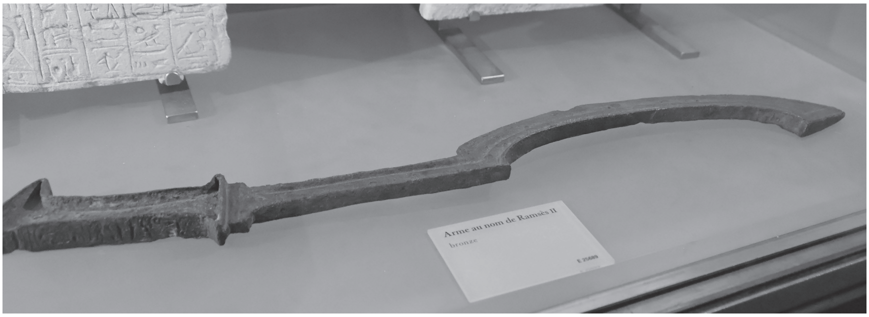

Fig. 7.3. Sickle sword with the name of Ramesses II. Louvre E 25689. Photo courtesy of Todd Bolen, BiblePlaces.com.

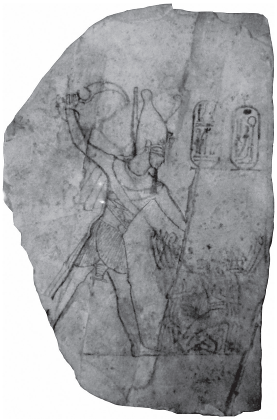

Fig. 7.4. Ramesses IV smiting enemy with sickle sword. Museum of Fine Arts 09.289, Boston; Photo courtesy of Keith Schengili-Roberts, Wikimedia Commons

found in Hittite contexts and were most likely used in battle.[24] Various swords have been recovered from Hittite times (though many of these are shorter and considered daggers).[25] A sword with an inscription has been found at Hattusa and dates to the time of Tudhaliya I/II: “As Tudhaliya the Great King shattered the Assuwan country, he dedicated these swords to the Storm God, his lord."[26] In contrast to the straight swords, a relief of gods marching in procession carrying sickle-swords has been found near Boghazköy (fig.7.5).[27]

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[24] Lorenz and Schrakamp, “Hittite Military and Warfare,” 128, 136; however, they might have been strictly ritual items as well, as argued in Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 522. For a relief of a Hittite holding an axe, see *ANEP*, 13, no. 38 (Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara); for an artist’s reconstruction of a Hittite warrior holding an axe, see Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 33.

[25] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:44; Lorenz and Schrakamp, “Hittite Military and Warfare,” 128, 136; Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 19–20; for a relief from Zinjirli of a Neo-Hittite soldier (possible a deity) with a long sword hung through his belt, see *ANEP*, 13, no. 36 (Berlin VA 2647); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:222.

In a letter from Hattusili III of Hatti to Adad-nirari I of Assyria, the Hittite king responds to the Assyrian king's request for weapons of iron. Although this letter might make it appear that the Hittites had a monopoly on iron at this time, iron could be found elsewhere in the ancient Near East at the time.[28]

> In regard to the good iron about which you wrote to me—good iron is not available in my armory in the city of Kizzuwatna. I have written that it is a bad time for making iron. They will make good iron, but they have not yet finished it. When they finish it, I will send it to you. For the moment I have sent you a dagger blade of iron.
>
> [In regard to] the suits of armor which you sent to me, saying: "[Send] blades [of iron in return for these]!"—they have not yet finished making [the iron. When they finish, I will send them] to you. I have become(?) like you. […] the request which you wrote me about […][29]

7.1.3. Early Mesopotamia

Maces, axes, and spears were all common in third millennium Mesopotamia.[30] Although a few swords appear then, they do not become widespread

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[26] Bryce, *Kingdom of the Hittites*, 126–27; for third-millennium straight swords (or daggers), see Metropolitan 55.137.16, 55.137.17, 55.137.18, 55.137.19, and 55.137.20.

[27] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:205; these might be strictly ritual items, as argued in Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 138; Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 522.

[28] Jane C. Waldbaum, *From Bronze to Iron: The Transition from the Bronze Age to the Iron Age in the Eastern Mediterranean*, SMA 54 (Göterborg: Åströms Förlag, 1978), 20–21; Waldbaum, "The First Archaeological Appearance of Iron and the Transition to the Iron Age," in *The Coming of the Age of Iron*, ed. Theodore A. Wertime and James D. Muhly (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 81; James D. Muhly, "The Bronze Age Setting," in Wertime, *Coming of the Age of Iron*, 50–51; Silvin Košak, "The Gospel of Iron," in *Kaniššuwar: A Tribute to Hans G. Güterbock on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday, May 27, 1983*, ed. Harry A. Hoffner Jr. and Gary M. Beckman, AS 23 (Chicago: Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1990), 134.

[29] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 148–49 (*CTH* 173).

[30] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:41–42, 45–46; Lafont, "Army of the

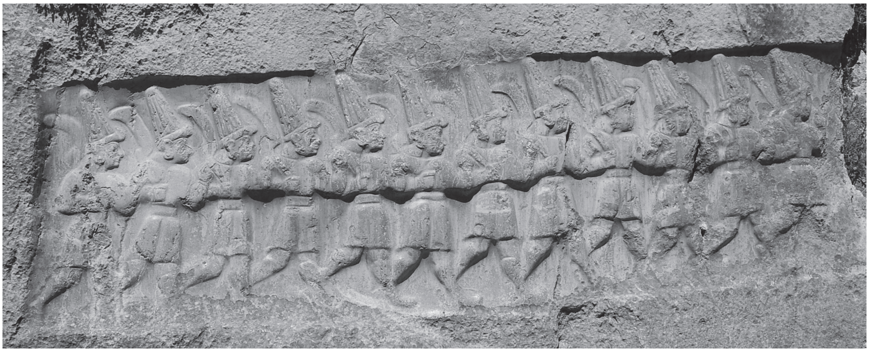

Fig. 7.5. Hittite sickle swords. Yazılıkaya, Turkey. Photo courtesy of A. D. Riddle, BiblePlaces.com.

until later.[31] In the second millennium, the most common hand-to-hand weapons at Mari were the axe and the sword (including daggers). Spears are also commonly referred to in the Mari texts, such as the reference to two thousand spearmen (ARM 26.35).[32] In a Mari letter, Buqaqum even reported to Zimri-Lim that he would poison their lances (ARM 26.483).[33] The mace appears occasionally, but seems to be dropping out of use and becoming a ritual item in the second millennium.[34] The following inscription was designed to be written on an axe, but all surviving copies are on clay tablets and appear to have been used to train scribes.

> Nibruta-lu, the son of the merchant Lugal-šuba, has had this tin axe made for Nergal. Its wooden part is of the arganum tree of the mountains, a wood which is superior even to the alal stone; its stone part is of antasura, a stone which has no equal. The arm of the man who strikes with it will never get tired.
>
> Should it break, I will repair it for Nergal. Should it disappear, I will replace it for him.

Kings of Ur," 7–8, 15; the god Ningirsu holds a mace in the Stele of the Vultures; see *ANEP*, 94, no. 298 (Louvre AO 16109).

[31] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:44–45.

[32] Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 252.

[33] For more on poisoning arrows, see R. Miller, E. McEwen, and C. Bergman, "Experimental Approaches to Near Eastern Archery," *WA* 18 (1986): 190; for the argument that Hab 3:9 refers to YHWH poisoning arrows, see Michael L. Barré, "Yahweh Gears Up for Battle: Habakkuk 3,9a," *Bib* 87 (2006): 75–84.

[34] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 28–30.

> May Nergal look after me during my life, and may he provide me with clean water in the Underworld after my death.[35]

7.1.4. Assyrian

Several hand-to-hand weapons appear in Assyrian reliefs and texts.[36] The most common hand-to-hand weapon for the Assyrians was the spear, which appears frequently among the Assyrian infantry and cavalry and seems to be the primary short-range weapon (figs. 7.6 and 7.7).[37] At least in the reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III, spearmen held the spears in an overhand grip, except while climbing siege ladders, when they used an underhand stance.[38] Earlier spears were around five feet long, but beginning during the reign of Sargon II they extended to nine feet.[39] Assyrian spearheads were always made of iron and socketed, but beyond these consistent features they exhibited great variety.[40]

Assyrian swords, usually straight, double-edged, and somewhat short, are attested as part of the armament of Assyrian soldiers in the reliefs, but very few of them have been preserved archaeologically. Most likely, swords and daggers were secondary weapons used when there was no other choice or as part of after-battle actions.[41] Assyrian letters refer sev-

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[35] Black et al., *Literature of Ancient Sumer*, 157.

[36] Several works cover this topic, including Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*; Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour"; Jaume Llop, "The Weaponry of the Middle Assyrian Army according to the Written Sources," *HiMA* 3 (2016): 204–12; Tamás Dezső has promised a comprehensive volume on the topic, *The Assyrian Army (3): The Arms and Armour of the Neo-Assyrian Army*, but at the time of writing it has not yet been published.

[37] On Assyrian spears, see Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 52–54; Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 79–112; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 38–50, 89–98, 107–12.

[38] Peter Dubovský, "Neo-Assyrian Warfare: Logistics and Weaponry During the Campaigns of Tiglath-Pileser III," in *Proceedings of the International Symposium: Arms and Armour through the Ages*, ed. M. Novotná et al. (Trnava: Trnavská Univerzita, 2006), 62.

[39] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 228; Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 100.

[40] Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 102.

[41] Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 44–49; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 50–71; Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 46–78; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 227–28.

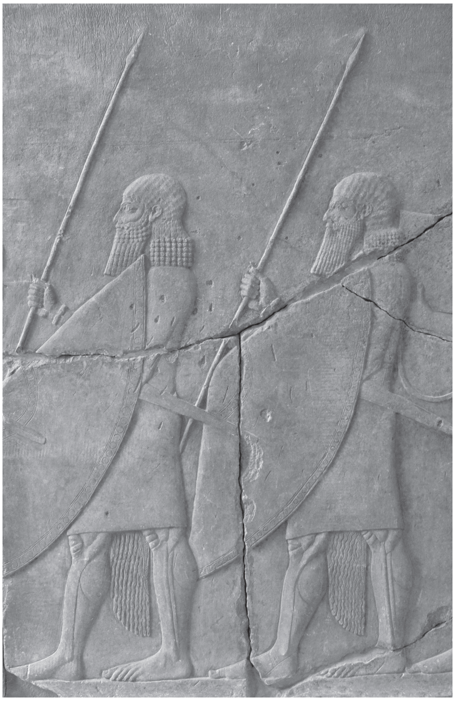

Fig. 7.6. Assyrian soldiers with spears and shields. Museum of the Ancient Near East, Berlin. Photo courtesy of Wolfgang Sauber, Wikimedia Commons.

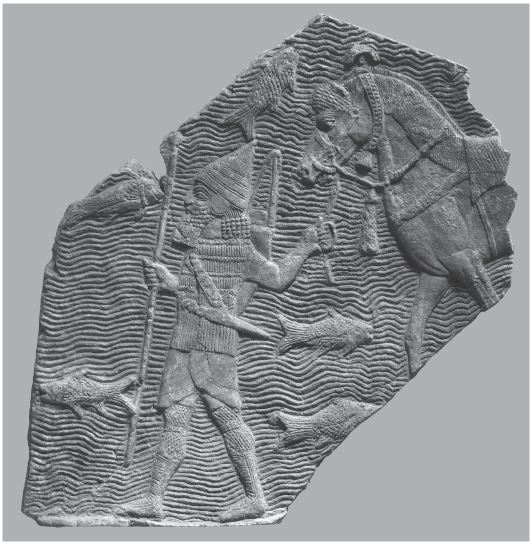

Fig. 7.7. Assyrian soldier leading horse. Metropolitan 32.143.18. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

eral times to iron swords. After the death of an Assyrian king (most likely Sargon II or Sennacherib), a governor acted in a threatening manner with soldiers who were equipped with armor and iron swords (SAA 16.95). When Bel-iqisha grumbled about three officers who were drunkards, he described their chaotic behavior this way: "When they are drunk, none of them can turn his iron sword away from his colleague" (SAA 16.115). An unidentified author complained to Esarhaddon about smiths who took the iron given to them by the king and sold it to merchants (SAA 18.115). A group of blacksmiths wrote a letter protesting about being required to do too much work (SAA 16.40):

> We have made and delivered 200 swords of iron, 100 *purṭû*-weapons of iron, 25 nails of iron for …s, (and) 200 *pakku*s of iron, but we cannot make another 200 *pakku*s of iron. A brother of ours is dying in the house of the baker. For all this work, nobody has given u[s]any firewood. Therefore we cannot *ta*[*ke care of* …]
>
> [*We are*] 17 blacksmiths, (but) none (of us)has a field […]. Because we have no field, nobody has given us seed corn. The works of the palaces have become a burden on us. May the king enquire and thoroughly investigate (this matter): we *have withdrawn* because of it. Let the king ask the cohort commanders: "Where are the men?" The men have gone away and entered the palaces because of the *ilku*-duty.

Drews argues that the archers were the main offensive Assyrian force and that the soldiers rarely fought in hand-to-hand combat. [42] However, some reliefs contain the motif of soldiers attacking with hand-to-hand weapons, a feature especially prominent in the battle at Ulai of Assurbanipal.[43] One relief from Assurbanipal shows a whole series of Assyrian soldiers attacking their enemies with spears and swords.[44] Beyond direct evidence of their use, their common appearances in the reliefs most likely demonstrate that they would have been used more often than simply a back-up weapon in case the archers failed.

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42. Drews, *Early Riders*, 127.

43. See, e.g., a soldier holding a sword climbing a siege ladder in a relief (though it is short and could be classified as a dagger) from Assurnasirpal II in Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 118; Rodriquez, "The Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 56. For the battle of Ulai, see Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 288–99, nos. 381–83 (Or.Dr.II.2–3 = BM 124801).

44. Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 25 (Or.Dr.VII.11–12).

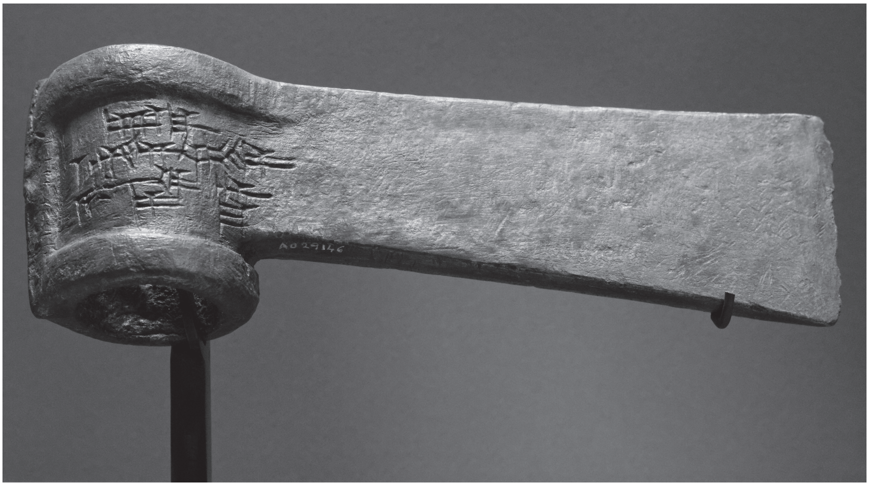

Fig. 7.8. Axe with name of Adad-nirari I. Louvre AO 29146. Photo courtesy of Marie-Lan Nguyen, Wikimedia Commons.

Other weapons are also known to have been used by the Assyrians. Maces appear often in reliefs in the hands of officers, probably as a sign of their rank.[45] Axes were mostly used as tools for such tasks as cutting down trees, though a few reliefs depict soldiers using them on enemy soldiers.[46] Clubs or maces appear throughout Assyrian reliefs, but they mainly appear as ceremonial weapons or employed in processions (though they are employed against prisoners in a few places, such as fig. 5.21).[47] Various weapons have been found from the Middle Assyrian Empire with inscriptions. A sickle sword from Assyria was inscribed with the name of Adad-nirari I (Metropolitan 11.166.1), as well as an axe (fig. 7.8). A mace head contained the name of Tukulti-Ninurta I (fig. 7.9).

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[45] Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 61–63; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 227.

[46] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 227; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 87–93; the relief can be seen in Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:443; Barnett, *Sculptures from the North Palace*, pl. 296.

[47] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 113–25; for an example of a mace being used against a prisoner, see Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 288–89, no. 381 (Or.Dr.II.2 = BM 124801a).

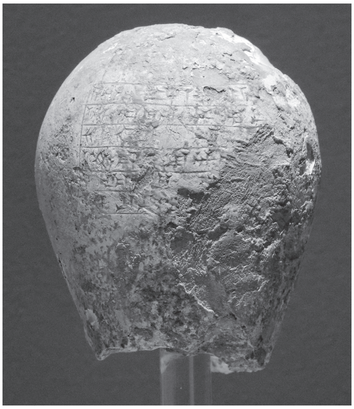

Fig. 7.9. Mace head with name of Tukulti-Ninurta I. Louvre AO 2152. Photo courtesy of Marie-Lan Nguyen, Wikimedia Commons.

7.1.5. Later Empires

Inscriptions adorned many weapons during the late second millennium. Nabu-mukin-apli, a governor of Babylon, left an inscription on a mace head.[48] An axe was inscribed with the name of the Elamite king Untash-Napirisha (Louvre Sb 3973). Marduk-nadin-ahhe, a Babylonian king from around 1100, and Shamash-killani, one of his officers, inscribed their names on swords found in western Iran (fig. 7.10).

Extensive information is lacking concerning both Neo-Babylonian and Persian weaponry, though presumably many of the Assyrian weapons continue to be used. Spears appear frequently in Persian reliefs and are mentioned in temple records from Babylonian times, so perhaps they were the primary hand-to-hand weapon (fig. 7.11).[49] Xenophon recorded that the Persians were equipped with spears (*Cyr.* 7.1.2). The temple records also refer to daggers and adzes.[50]

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[48] RIMB 2:271–72, 6.0.2001.

[49] For a relief of Persians holding spears, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:464; for an Elamite in the Persian army with a spear, see *ANEP*, 11, no. 30 (Louvre); for similar figures, see Louvre Sb 21965 and Sb 3320; many examples can also be seen in the Pergamon Museum. For the temple texts referring to spears, see Kristin Kleber, "Zu Waffen und Ausrüstung babylonischer Soldaten in der zweiten Hälfte des 1. Jt. v. Chr," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 439.

[50] Kleber, "Zu Waffen und Ausrüstung babylonischer Soldaten," 439–42.

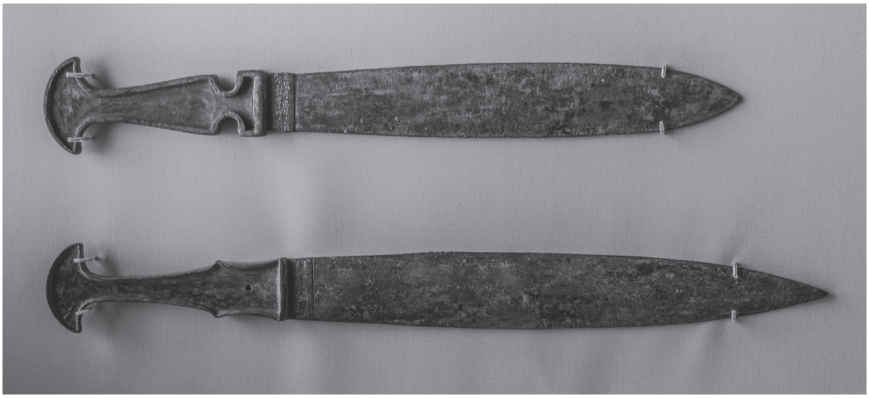

Fig. 7.10. Babylonian swords. BM 123060 (on the left) and 123061 (on the right). Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

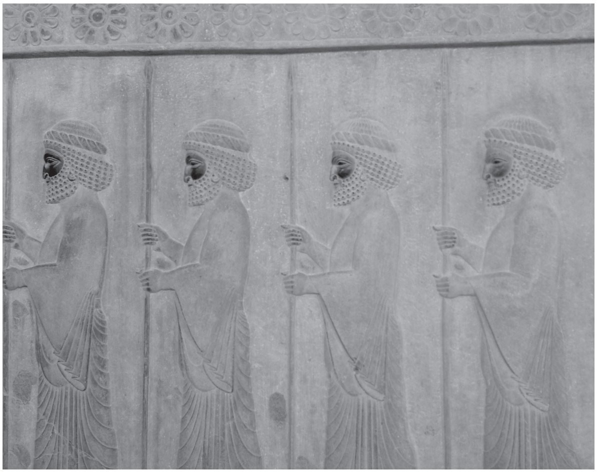

Fig. 7.11. Persian soldiers with spears. Persepolis, Iran. Photo courtesy of Madiz, Wikimedia Commons.

7.1.6. West Semitic

As in other areas, maces and axes were popular early weapons; a rich cache of mace heads was found near En Gedi, dating to around 3000 BCE.[51]

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[51] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:40.

However, clubs and maces are rare in the area in the Iron Age, perhaps due to the rise in use of the helmet.[52] Figures in the Tell Halaf reliefs (Iron Age) carry clubs or maces.[53] Axes were common in the area in the second millennium; an iron axe has been found at Ugarit from about 1400 BCE.[54] However, very few axes have been recovered archaeologically from the area in the Iron Age (1200–586). The Old Testament refers to axes, but usually as a tool rather than a weapon.[55] A broken Neo-Hittite relief includes a soldier holding an axe (BM C.145).

The reliefs of Ramesses III depict the Sea People (some of whom ended up living in Canaan) carrying spears.[56] The Old Testament records two large spears belonging to Philistines: Goliath (1 Sam 17:7) and Ishbi-benob (2 Sam 21:16).[57] The Old Testament also describes the Israelites employing spears, and Israelite troops in Sennacherib's relief of Lachish are depicted holding spears.[58] Iron Age reliefs from Tell Halaf, Carchemish, Arslan Tash, and Moab also depict figures holding spears (figs. 7.12 and 7.22).[59] Although it is difficult to differentiate spear heads from arrow heads, the larger size of some of them indicate that they are spear heads (spear butts have also been found).[60] A text from Alalakh from the eighteenth century refers to four hundred iron weapons (perhaps spears), but this does not fit the archaeological record of the time, as iron items tended to be ceremonial rather than functional.[61]

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[52] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 97–111, 286, 289.

[53] Ibid., 113.

[54] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:59–60; Waldbaum, *From Bronze to Iron*, 17.

[55] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 78–85, 284–89.

[56] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:113, 115; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 1*, pls. 32, 36; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 306–7.

[57] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 170.

[58] Ibid., 59–60.

[59] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 145–46; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:363; one example with a spear is BM 117106 at the British Museum (no image online); another image from Carchemish of figures with spears can be seen in Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesi, *Museum of Anatolian Civilizations*, 148.

[60] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 160–69, 290–331; for another study of spear heads in the southern Levant from Iron Age II, see Allen C. Emery III, "Weapons of the Israelite Monarchy: A Catalogue with Its Linguistic and Cross-Cultural Implications" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1998), 45–66, 120–36.

[61] Waldbaum, "First Archaeological Appearance of Iron," 75–76; for the text, see Wiseman, *Alalakh Tablets*, 107, no. 410.

As noted above, the Sea People employed long straight swords (according to the reliefs of Ramesses III). Such a sword has been discovered near Joppa from the twelfth to eleventh centuries, perhaps from the Philistines.[62] A set of four straight long swords was also found in Ugarit, perhaps made just before its destruction.[63] A straight sword with Merenptah's name on it has also been discovered at Ugarit.[64] A sickle-sword is depicted in an ivory carving from Megiddo from the thirteenth century.[65] The Tell Halaf reliefs depict two Aramean swords, but it is difficult to determine many specifics from them.[66]

The Old Testament contains hundreds of references to swords, but it is unclear whether these were sickle swords or straight long swords. A set of six swords taken as plunder in Sennacherib's relief of his conquest of Lachish are slightly curved (more like a scimitar than the sickle sword), while another set of swords taken as plunder are straight.[67] However, very few long swords have been discovered in Palestine from the Iron Age, so they appear to have been rare compared to other weapons.[68] Based on the reference in 1 Sam 13:19–22, some have argued that the Philistines had an iron monopoly during the early Iron Age, which is supported by a large number of iron items recovered from Philistia during that time.[69] However, the main weapons of the time were still bronze, and the word "iron" does not appear in the 1 Samuel passage; the word חרש can refer to a smith that works with any kind of metal.[70]

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[62] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 170; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 43–45; for a study of swords and daggers from the southern Levant in Iron Age II, see Emery, "Weapons of the Israelite Monarchy," 67–75, 137–43.

[63] Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 206–8.

[64] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:79, 209; for the short text on the sword, see "Bronze Sword from Ugarit," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.7:20.

[65] Gordon Loud, *The Megiddo Ivories*, OIP 52 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), pl. 2; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:206.

[66] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 48–49; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:362; the relief is VA 8857 at the Berlin Museum.

[67] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 58–59; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 64–65; for more on the curved swords, see Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 63–65.

[68] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 75–76; for data and picture of swords and daggers found in Palestine from the Iron Age, see ibid., 255–82.

[69] For a list of these items, see Waldbaum, *From Bronze to Iron*, 24–27.

[70] Ibid., 42.

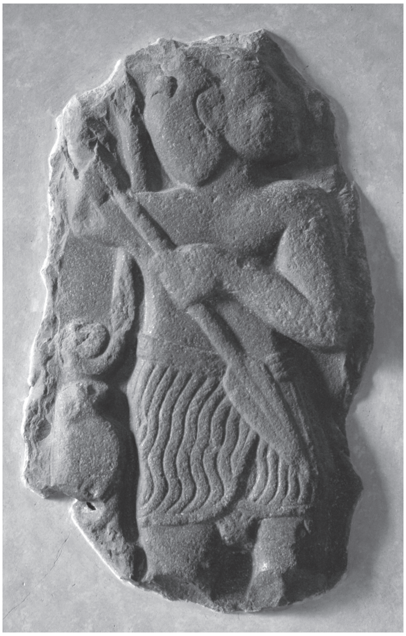

Fig. 7.12. Moabite warrior with spear. Louvre 5055. Photo courtesy of Jastrow, Wikimedia Commons.

7.2. Distance Weapons

> The basic rule of warfare that should be taught is that men short in stature should carry spears and spear-tipped halberds, while the tall should carry bows and crossbows.
>
> —Wu-Tzu 3

Although nations employed both the javelin and the sling, the preeminent distance weapon was the bow.[71] The ancient Near East had two kinds of bows: the simple bow (sometimes called a self-bow) and a composite bow. The composite bow was much more effective (giving the arrow more power) and more resilient (it could stay strung for a longer period of time).[72]

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[71] For more on the force exerted by sling stones on the human body, see Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 74–75.

[72] For more on the construction of bows, see Miller, McEwen, and Bergman, "Experimental Approaches to Near Eastern Archery"; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:6–9; C. Zutterman, "The Bow in the Ancient Near East: A Re-Evaluation of Archery from the Late Second Millennium to the End of the Achaemenid Empire," *IrAnt* 38 (2003): 119–65; Dominique Collon, "Le développement de l'arc en Méso-

7.2.1. Egypt

The spear, though most often used in hand-to-hand combat, could also be thrown at the enemy. They were commonly portrayed as stored in chariots; a smaller form of the spear could have been used for throwing and become more popular along with the rise of the chariot.[73] A throw-stick is also attested, though it was not common in the New Kingdom (it was more widespread during the Middle Kingdom). They were made of wood and curved (though they were not designed to return like a boomerang). They were mainly used for hunting birds and their effectiveness against humans seems minimal.[74]

The bow was the distinguished distance weapon in Egypt.[75] A few references to the bow being used in warfare exist in the Old Kingdom (fig. 7.13), but it becomes more common in the Middle and New Kingdom. The earliest bows were simple bows (usually made of acacia wood and animal gut for string) with a range of around sixty meters. The arrows were made from reeds with a hard stem, while arrowheads were made from flint, bone, ivory, or wood.[76]

The composite bow appears to have become prominent in Egypt after the arrival of the Hyksos, as the rise of the use of chariots at the same time allows greater effectiveness of the weapon.[77] The composite bow was made by gluing together thin slices of wood, horn, and sinew, giving it greater strength and range (an effective range was most likely around 120 meters). However, the composite bows were more difficult to maintain and considerably more expensive, so they were most likely restricted to use by

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potamie," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 93–112; Gabriel and Metz, *From Sumer to Rome*, 66–74.

[73] Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 180–92; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 141–45; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 122.

[74] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 36–37; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 74; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 122.

[75] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 39–46; Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, 44–58; Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 17–22; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 70–73; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 183–89; Heagren, "Art of War in Pharaonic Egypt," 69–73; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 122–23.

[76] Many examples of pictures of bows from the Middle Kingdom can be seen in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:6, 8, 10.

[77] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 15.

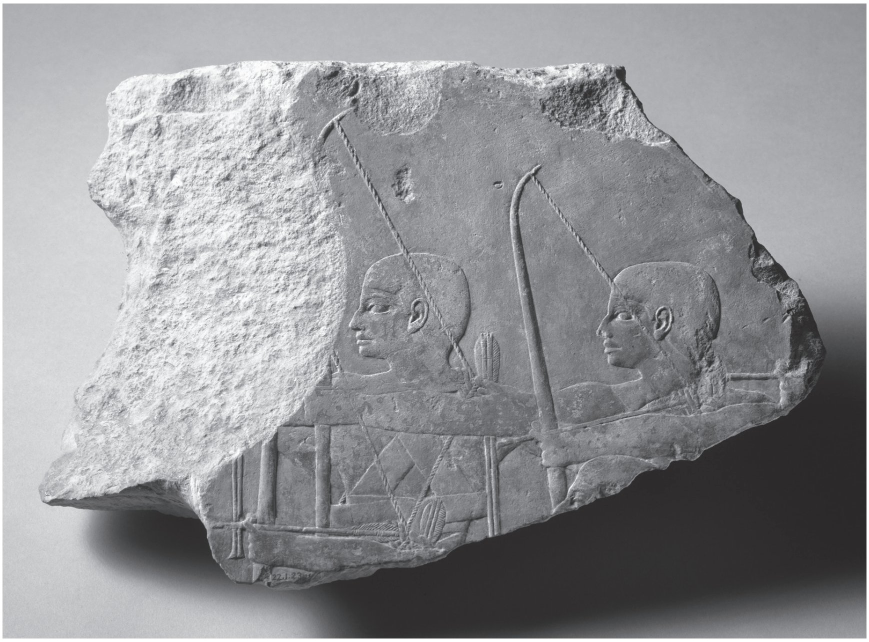

Fig. 7.13. Egyptian archers from the Fourth Dynasty. Metropolitan 22.1.23. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

officers. Both types of bows were found in Tutankhamen's tomb, as well as arrows.[78] The Middle Kingdom tomb of Mesehti contained models of Nubian archers. The Nubian Maiherpri was buried in the Valley of the Kings (during the Eighteenth Dynasty) and was discovered with some of his weapons, including his arrows and quivers.[79] Bow cases are depicted in reliefs, perhaps demonstrating the delicacy of the weapon. In the New Kingdom bronze arrowheads also became more popular, most likely as a way to defeat heavier armor.[80] In the New Kingdom, pharaohs often portrayed themselves shooting bows and prided themselves on their archery skills, such as in this text from Thutmose III.

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[78] 78. Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 207–10, 232–34.

[79] 79. Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 44–45; the archers from the Mesehti tomb and the archery equipment of Maiherpri are in the Cairo Egyptian Museum; a picture of the archers from the Mesehti tomb is *ANEP*, 55, no. 179.

[80] 80. Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 95–97.

> Whenever he shoots at a target every piece of wood is split like papyrus reed. His Majesty offered an example thereof in the temple of Amun comprising a target of beaten copper of a thickness of three fingers with his arrow in it, for he had transfixed it causing it, (i.e. the arrow) to protrude three palms' length behind it, in order to cause his followers to pray for the strength of his arms in valour and might. It is without lying and without falsehood and with no word of exaggeration therein that I speak the truth concerning that which he does among and in front of his whole army.[81]

Slings were rarely found throughout Egypt, even though their range is greater than that of the bow (modern experiments show a range of two hundred meters).[82] Their only appearance in the New Kingdom is in the naval battle against the Sea People under Ramesses III, though two slings were also discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamen.[83] Based on the relief of Ramesses III (top left corner of fig 4.35), it appears that the sling was used by whirling it horizontally above the head. The Victory Stele of Piye also refers to slingers who participated in the attack of Hermopolis.[84]

7.2.2. Hittite

The archers as a distinct unit are rarely mentioned in Hittite texts, but since Hittite texts refer to arrows as part of the chariot equipment, most likely they employed chariot archers.[85] They could have had infantry archers as well, since administrative records refer to large numbers of bows and arrows.[86]

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[81] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 8, no. 366 (Armant Stela); also *COS* 2.2C:18–19.

[82] On slings in Egypt, see Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 35–36; Darnell and Manassa, *Tutankhamun's Armies*, 73; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 240, 244–50; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 123.

[83] For these and other slings from Egypt, see Nick Wernick, "Slings in the Ancient Near East with Reference to the Egyptian Material," *ZÄS* 141 (2014): 97–103; Wernick is also skeptical of the long-range ability of the slings.

[84] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 481.

[85] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 148–49; Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 121–22; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 139–40; Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 102.

[86] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 137–38.

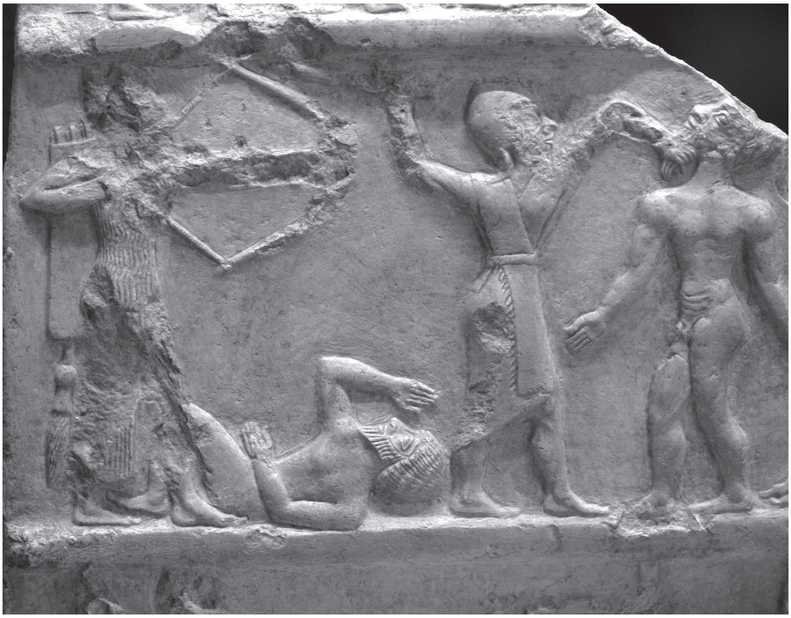

Fig. 7.14. Archer on Sargonic victory stela. Louvre AO 2678. Photo courtesy of Rama, Wikimedia Commons.

Kings were often pictured with a bow, demonstrating its high status.[87] It is unknown if the Hittites employed slingers.[88]

7.2.3. Early Mesopotamia

Sumerian riders in wheeled vehicles were depicted carrying javelins (their quivers were for javelins), but they do not seem to be common throughout most of the period.[89] Bows are depicted in reliefs as early as 4500, and continue appearing in reliefs for thousands of years.[90] For example, the Sargonic victory stela contains a figure of an archer (fig. 7.14). Yigael

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[87] Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 99–100; for an example of such a relief showing Suppiluliuma II as an archer, see Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 21.

[88] Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 138; Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 522.

[89] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:46.

[90] For these early reliefs, see Collon, "Développement de l'arc en Mésopotamie."

Yadin argues that the bows appearing in Mari in the third millennium and the Sargonic victory stela are composite bows, but others dispute his evidence.[91] Documents from Ur III indicate that bows (both composite and simple) and slings were the primary distance weapons there.[92]

Bows and arrows appear in the texts from Mari, as well as throw-sticks, slings, and javelins.[93] One text includes an order from Shamshi-Adad for ten thousand bronze arrowheads, but due to a tin shortage was forced to reduce it to five thousand (ARM 1.38 = LAPO 17.663 = Sasson 3.3.d.i.1). Some evidence points to the existence of fire arrows (ARM 6.69 = LAPO 17.572), which would have been effective in a siege to help destroy enemy buildings or supplies.[94]

7.2.4. Assyrian

Javelins, a smaller version of the spear used for throwing, were often portrayed as part of the arsenal of a chariot.[95] Throw-sticks appear in a few reliefs, but it is unknown whether they were used in combat.[96] A few reliefs also depict slingers, such as those at Lachish (fig. 7.15).[97] Sling-

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[91] The Mari relief is in the Museum of Deir ez-Zor in Syria; for pictures, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 218; Aruz, *Art of the First Cities*, 158. For the debate, see Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 98; Yigael Yadin, "The Earliest Representation of a Siege Scene and a 'Scythian Bow' from Mari," *IEJ* 22 (1972): 89–94; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:47, 150; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 89–95; Collon, "Développement de l'arc en Mésopotamie," 95–96.

[92] Lafont, "Army of the Kings of Ur," 7–8.

[93] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 25–27; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 254–55.

[94] Miller, McEwen, and Bergman, "Experimental Approaches to Near Eastern Archery," 190–91; Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 30; however, the reading involving fire is uncertain, for the different reading "L'enthousiasme des Bédouins ne s'éteint pas," see Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 194–95; some have suggested that the arrow in the third millennium Mari siege scene is a fire arrow based on the markings along the arrow; see A. H. Gilibert, "Warfare Techniques in Early Dynastic Mesopotamia," *Anodos* 4–5 (2004): 98–99.

[95] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 228–29; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 146–60.

[96] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 114–15.

[97] On Assyrian slingers, see Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the*

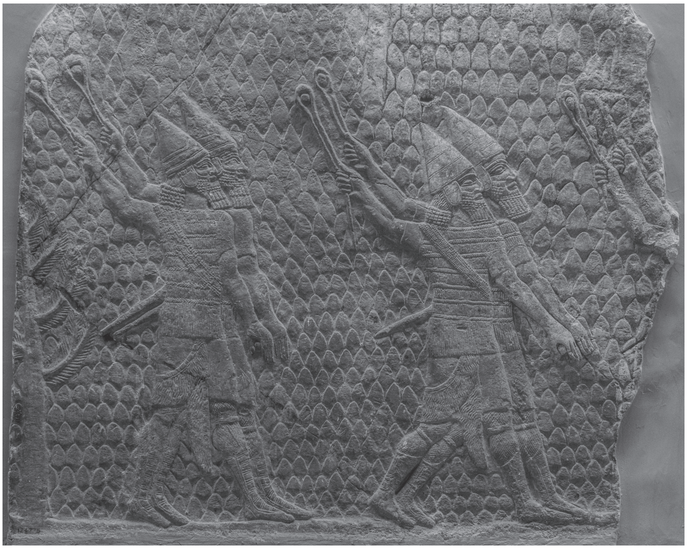

Fig. 7.15. Assyrian slingers at Lachish. BM 124775. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

stones recovered from Lachish are about 2.5 in. in diameter (fig. 7.16).[98] Based on their depictions in the reliefs (where the slings are not directly over the head of the slinger), Rodriquez suggests that the Assyrian slingers (in contrast to the Egyptians) slung them in a vertical circle rather than a horizontal circle.[99]

The bow was the most prominent distance weapon of the Assyrians (figs. 7.17 and 7.18).[100] Although simple bows were known, the Assyrians primarily employed composite bows. Arrows were made of wood with bronze or iron arrowheads. The infantry contained both light- and heavy-armed archers. The Assyrians employed an archer-pair, in which

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Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry), 51, 112–13; Llop, "Weaponry of the Middle Assyrian Army," 216.

[98] Ussishkin, *Conquest of Lachish by Sennacherib*, 55–56; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 241–44, 332–42; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 231.

[99] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 250.

[100] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 229–31; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 190–205, 223–32; Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 49–52, 58–61; Dezső, *Assyrian Army (1): The Structure of the Neo-Assyrian Army (Infantry)*, 25–38, 82–88, 99–107; Llop, "Weaponry of the Middle Assyrian Army," 212–16. For fig. 7.17, see also Barnett and Falkner, *Sculptures*, pl. 12.

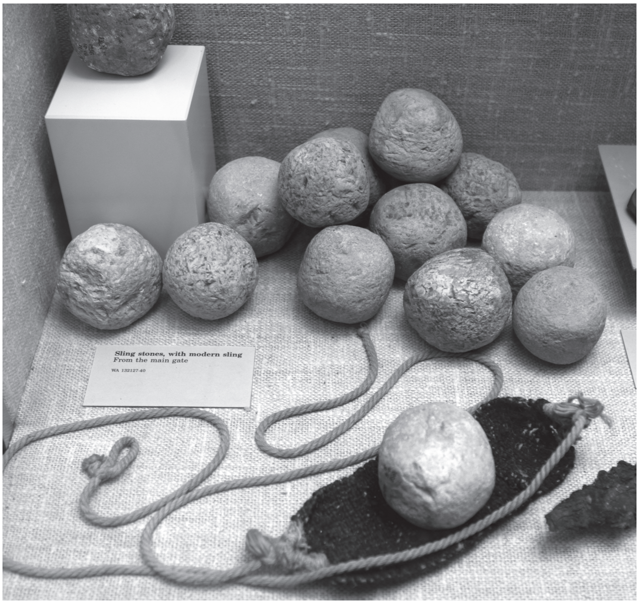
Sling stones, with modern sling
From the main gate
WA 132127-40

Fig. 7.16. Slingstones from Lachish. BM 132127. Photo courtesy of Justin Ennis, Flickr.

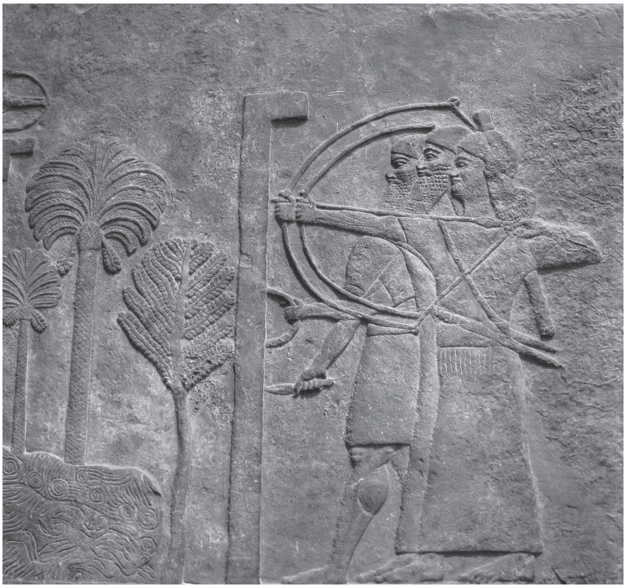

Fig. 7.17. Assyrian archers with a large shield attacking a city. British Museum 118904. Photo courtesy of ChrisO, Wikimedia Commons.

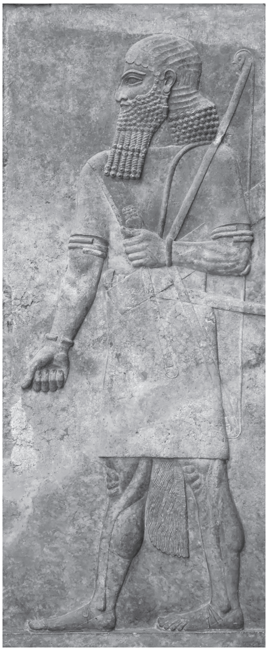

Fig. 7.18. Assyrian archer. Louvre AO 19877. Photo courtesy of Jastro, Wikimedia Commons.

the archer was defended by a shield-bearer.[101] For example, Sennacherib claims that he conscripted equal numbers of archers and shield bearers to his army from defeated territories. "From the booty of those lands that I had plundered, I conscripted 10,000 archers (and) 10,000 shield bearers and added (them) to my royal contingent."[102] Although their function is unknown, the tablets from Fort Shalmaneser include several texts that list military supplies, such as arrows, bows, and shields. For example, a tablet dated to 683 by the *limmu* (reign of Sennacherib) records: "784 bows of the city Arpad."[103] The bow was also the main weapon of the charioteers and the cavalry, as commonly depicted in the reliefs.

The bow seems to have been the primary Assyrian weapon, even more important than hand-to-hand weapons. For example, armies are often spoken of simply as "archers." In a query to the Sun God, Assurbanipal reports that he heard an enemy had mustered archers in Elam, referring to the army (SAA 4.280). Chariots and distance weapons received the most attention out of all the military equipment when Sennacherib built a large outer courtyard for the inspection of military equipment, of which he provides a long list: "thoroughbred horses, mules, *agālu*-donkeys, military equipment, chariots, carts, wagons, quivers, *bows*, and *uṣṣu*-arrows, every type of implement of war."[104] An iron arrow became symbolic of Assyrian military power, as evidenced by Tiglath-pileser III's use of it. "At that time, I made a pointed iron 'arrow,' in[scribed] the mighty deeds of

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[101] Drews, *Early Riders*, 103, this pair is common in the reliefs, see fig.17; for a detailed study of how these archer pairs might have operated in combat, see De Backer, *Neo-Assyrian Shield*, 103–20.

[102] RINAP 3.1:66, 4, 59.

[103] Dalley and Postgate, *Tablets from Fort Shalmaneser*, 135, tablet 76 (ND 7008); ND 11305 and ND 7060 are similar; see ibid., 134–35.

[104] RINAP 3.1:185, 22, 66–68.

(the god) Aššur, my lord, on it, (and) I set (it)up at [the spring] of the city Bīt-Ištar."[105] In line with this glorification of the bow, the Assyrian kings portrayed themselves as expert archers. Tiglath-pileser I boasted that "I laid out by means of the bow (lit. 'at arrowpoint') the corpses of their fighting men right through the plain."[106] When a Babylonian army advanced toward Sennacherib, he describes himself as a powerful archer.

> I raged up like a lion, then put on armor (and) placed a helmet suitable for combat on my head. In my anger, I rode quickly in my exalted battle chariot, which lays enemies low. I took in my hand the mighty bow that the god Aššur had granted to me (and) I grasped in my hand an arrow that cuts off life.
>
> I roared loudly like a storm (and) thundered like the god Adad against all the troops of the wicked enemies. By the command of the god Aššur, the great lord, my lord, I blew like the onset of a severe storm against the enemy on (their) flanks, and front lines. With the weapons of the god Aššur, my lord, and my fierce battle array, I turned them back and made them retreat. I shot the troops of the enemy with *uṣṣu*-arrows and *mulmullu*-arrows, and pierced all their corpses like …[107]

7.2.5. Later Empires

The Babylonians appear to have used bows, but little is known about them. A few Sippar archival tablets provide a few hints. In one, two smiths describe their work making weapons. "Rēmūt and Sūqāya, the smiths, have delivered 4 minas 10 shekels of iron, the weight of the completed work of 8 spearheads."[108] Another tablet refers to different types of arrows: "50 Akkadian arrows, 118 Cimmerian arrows at the disposal of Lābāši the leatherworker."[109]

The bow also seems to be the most common distance weapon for the Persians, as Persian reliefs depict warriors carrying bows (fig. 7.19).[110]

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[105] RINAP 3.1:72, 28, 6–7.

[106] RIMA 2:42, A.0.87.4, 18–19.

[107] RINAP 3.1:182–83, 22, 67–82.

[108] MacGinnis, *Arrows of the Sun*, 80, no. 22 (BM 61341).

[109] Ibid., 85, no. 29 (BM 60923); another text, no. 28 (BM 61235), makes the same distinction between different kinds of bows that were "handed over for repair to Mukkēa the bowmaker." For more on these bows and arrows in the Sippar texts, see Kleber, "Zu Waffen und Ausrüstung babylonischer Soldaten," 430–38.

[110] The Pergamon Museum has several examples.

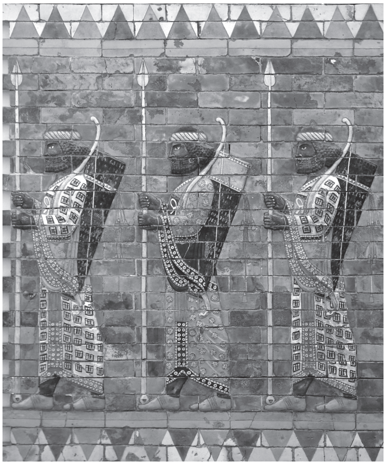

Fig. 7.19. Persian archers. Pergamon Museum, Berlin. Photo courtesy of Jakub Hałun, Wikimedia Commons.

Like the Assyrians, the Persians employed archer-pairs, in which a shield-bearer held a large shield that protected the archer.[111] According to Xenophon, Cyrus viewed the sling as a good weapon for a slave but not for others. "For in conjunction with other forces there are occasions when the presence of slingers is of very effective assistance, but by themselves alone not all the slingers in the world could stand against a very few men who came into a hand-to-hand encounter with them with weapons suited for close combat." (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 7.4.15 [Miller, LCL])

7.2.6. West Semitic

Up through the Middle Bronze Age arrowheads are rarely attested, perhaps because the sling seems to be the preferred long distance weapon during this time.[112] The Old Testament records that Goliath had a javelin, which he presumably would be able to throw a medium distance. In contrast, the sling of David would have had a much greater range and allowed him to engage the Philistine at a safe distance.[113] Other than David, the Old Testament refers to slings on a few occasions (Judg 20:16; 2 Kgs 3:25). The Sen-

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[111] Drews, *Early Riders*, 103.

[112] Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 97–98.

[113] For a recent discussion of how David's military strategy fits with the narrator's emphasis on David's trust in YHWH, see Benjamin J. M. Johnson, "Did David Bring a Gun to a Knife Fight? Literary and Historical Considerations in Interpreting David's Victory over Goliath," *ExpTim* 124 (2013): 530–37.

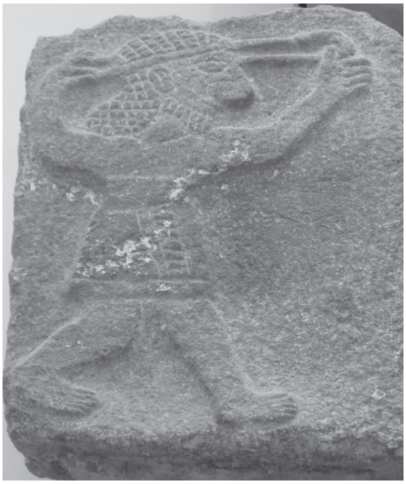

Fig. 7.20. Tell Halaf slinger. BM 117103. Photo courtesy of Deror_avi, Wikimedia Commons.

nacherib reliefs depict an Israelite slinger at Lachish, while the Tell Halaf reliefs also include a slinger (fig. 7.20).[114] Many sling stones have been found in the southern Levant from Iron Age II, mostly from Lachish.[115]

However, as elsewhere, the bow became the most important distance weapon. The number of arrowheads found throughout the area increased dramatically in the Late Bronze Age.[116] Arrowheads found at El Khadr (near Bethlehem) and dating to around 1100 BCE were inscribed with the name of their owner.[117] The Aqhat epic revolves around possession of a bow, while the Tell Halaf reliefs include an archer (fig. 7.21).[118] A relief from Arslan Tash in the early first millennium also depicts a warrior holding both a spear and a bow (fig. 7.22). Thutmose III captured 502 bows from the Canaanites gathered at Megiddo.[119] The Egyptian reliefs do not depict the Sea People carrying any bows, but one chariot

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[114] Lachish: Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 61–62; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 236–39. Tell Halaf: Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:364–65; Dawson, *First Armies*, 160; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 241.

[115] Emery, "Weapons of the Israelite Monarchy," 105–9.

[116] Genz, "Introduction of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 98–99; for a study of the arrowheads found in the southern Levant in Iron Age II, see Emery, "Weapons of the Israelite Monarchy," 23–44, 115–19.

[117] *COS* 2.84:221.

[118] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 241; Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 2:364–65; Dawson, *First Armies*, 160; the archer is AO 11072 in the Louvre.

[119] *COS* 2.2A:12.

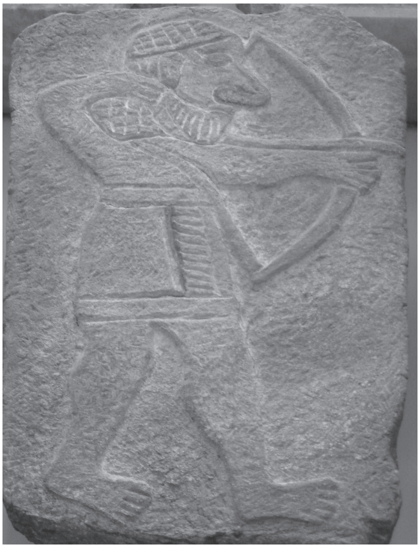

Fig. 7.21. Tell Halaf archer. BM 117100. Photo courtesy of Deror_avi, Wikimedia Commons.

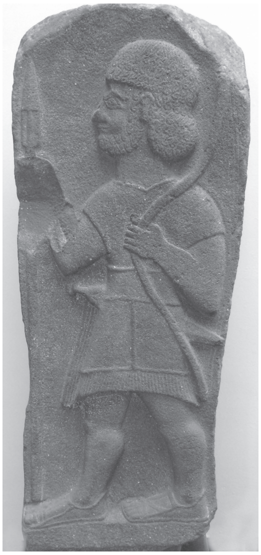

Fig. 7.22. Arslan Tash archer. Istanbul Museum of Archaeology. Photo courtesy of Ken Way.

might have a quiver.[120] In a cuneiform letter dating to the Late Bronze Age from Taanach, Ahiami requested military supplies for himself from Talwashur, including chariot wheels, a bow, and copper arrows, all relating to chariot warfare.[121]

The Old Testament contains many references to bows, though it is unclear which kind of bows were used (1 Kgs 22:34; 2 Kgs 13:15). The general Jehu used a bow against Joram as part of his coup (2 Kgs 9:24). Bows are included among the plunder from Lachish in Sennacherib's reliefs, and a seal from Jerusalem (seventh century) might indicate a composite bow since it is curved at each end.[122] Several poetic texts refer to flaming arrows (Ps 7:14 [ET 13]; 76:4 [ET 3]; Prov 26:18).[123]

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[120] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 171.

[121] Wayne Horowitz, Takayoshi Oshima, and Seth Sanders, *Cuneiform in Canaan: Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2006), 133–34 (Taanach 2).

[122] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 62–64; Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 174–77, 199–201, 206–7.

[123] Rodriquez, "Arsenal of the Hebrew Kings," 219–20.

7.3. Defensive Equipment

> All officers, from the generals down to the infantry squad leaders, wear armor.
>
> —The Methods of the Ssu-ma 4

The three main types of defensive equipment in the ancient Near East were shields, helmets, and body armor. Helmets proved especially useful against maces and clubs, but as noted above these weapons fell out of use with the rise of the helmet. Helmets could be made out of leather (often reinforced with metal), metal sheets (usually bronze), and scale armor (usually bronze).[124] Although shields were lighter and cheaper to construct than armor, armor allowed the wearer to use both hands in battle. At the beginning of the time period covered here, armor was rarely used, but became more common as the lethality of weapons increased. Since plate armor was not developed until after our time period, body armor in the ancient Near East was scale armor, in which scales were sewn to an undershirt (made out of a material such as leather or linen).[125] Scale armor would have been effective at defending against arrows and downward strokes, but not against an upward stroke of a sword or a spear.[126] Thomas Hulit made replicas of leather, bronze, and composite (alternating rows of leather and bronze scales) armor to test how effective it would be against arrows and provides details about every step of the process (he found it took fifty to sixty hours to make each suit of armor with the help of modern machinery; it would have taken much longer for an ancient craftsman). The tests were conducted at short range where the arrows would inflict the most damage and showed that the composite and bronze scale armor provided almost complete protection, while the leather armor offered moderate protection (and would presumably offer more protection at greater distances). One possible exception is that arrows shot at an oblique angle could potentially penetrate the armor (which might fit the scene described in 1 Kgs 22:34–35).[127] Although armor would have protected the wearer, it never made them invincible and it reduced their ability to move, requiring frequent assessment of the tradeoff between protection and mobility.

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[124] Tamás Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, BAR 992 (Oxford: Archaeopress 2001), 10.

[125] Most scholars have thought that the scales were made of metal, but Hulit has proposed that most scale armor was constructed out of leather; because it degrades quickly, it would not have remained archaeologically; see Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East."

[126] Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 55–57; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 125.

7.3.1. Egypt

Shields were the most basic form of defense for many soldiers. Egyptian shields appear to be rather large and made of wood covered in leather.[128] A wooden shield covered in antelope skin was found in Tutankhamen's tomb (it measured 72 x 51 cm [28 x 20 in]).[129] As noted in the previous chapter, shields could also be used to construct a shield wall around a military camp. Round shields came into use later in the New Kingdom and could have provided greater effectiveness due to their balance.[130] Several tomb paintings from Thebes (from the tombs of Hapu and Rekhmire) depict shields being made.[131] Helmets came into use in the New Kingdom for officers and by the end of the New Kingdom for common soldiers as well. As noted above, a helmet would have been particularly effective against a mace. However, wearing a metal helmet in the heat of Egypt would have been unpleasant.[132]

It appears that Egyptian troops did not wear much armor during the Early and Middle Kingdoms, but it became more prominent in the New Kingdom (fig. 7.23). It was primarily for officers at first, but by the time

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[127] Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 102–33; Hulit also included in his dissertation a catalogue of all armor found in the ancient Near East that dated from 1600–1100.

[128] For several pictures of shields from the Middle Kingdom, see Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:9, 15; on shields in Egypt, see Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 52–54; Gilbert, *Weapons, Warriors and Warfare in Early Egypt*, 43–44; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 124; Nick Wernick, "Ancient Egyptian Shields and Their Handles: A Functional Explanation of New Kingdom Developments," *JSSEA* 41 (2016).

[129] Cairo Museum (a total of eight shields were found in the tomb); for a picture, see Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:202.

[130] Drews, *End of the Bronze Age*, 178–79.

[131] Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:202–3.

[132] See Partridge, *Fighting Pharaohs*, 57–58; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 124.

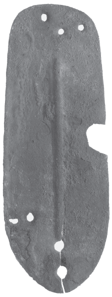

Fig. 7.23. New Kingdom scale armor. Metropolitan 11.215.452e. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

of Ramesses III many soldiers were wearing it.[133] An example of leather scale armor has been found in Tutankhamen's tomb. Although the original picture showed it to be largely intact, today it has largely fallen apart and about half of it is missing (it is held in the Cairo Museum). The scales were made of leather and were attached to a linen backing; there would have been approximately two thousand five hundred scales.[134] In general, defensive equipment became heavier in Egypt after the time of the Hyksos, when the chariot and the bow made combat more deadly. The increased armor included helmets, thicker body armor, and a greater number of shields.[135]

7.3.2. Hittite

Some Egyptian reliefs show Hittites with shields (with a narrower center), but they are rare.[136] At least some troops used scale armor, as scales have been found at Boğazköy and Hittite soldiers are depicted wearing armor in Egyptian reliefs.[137] A relief from a gate found at Boghazköy depicts a war-

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[133] For a discussion (with pictures) of the depiction of armor in New Kingdom reliefs, see Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 32–44.

[134] For pictures from the original excavation and in its current state, see ibid., figs. 34–39; for a study of the armor, see ibid., 86–99. Hulit also discusses armor found elsewhere in Egypt from the Late Bronze Age in his catalogue.

[135] Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, 15–16.

[136] Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 200; Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 18; several Hittite soldiers riding chariots at Qadesh carry these shields; see the reliefs in Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:21; Breasted, *Battle of Kadesh*, pls. 2, 3, 5; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 283, 288, 292–93; for pictures of a Neo-Hittite shield in this shape, see *ANEP* 13, no. 36 (VA 2647 in the Pergamon Museum).

[137] Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 141–43; Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 16–17; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 129.

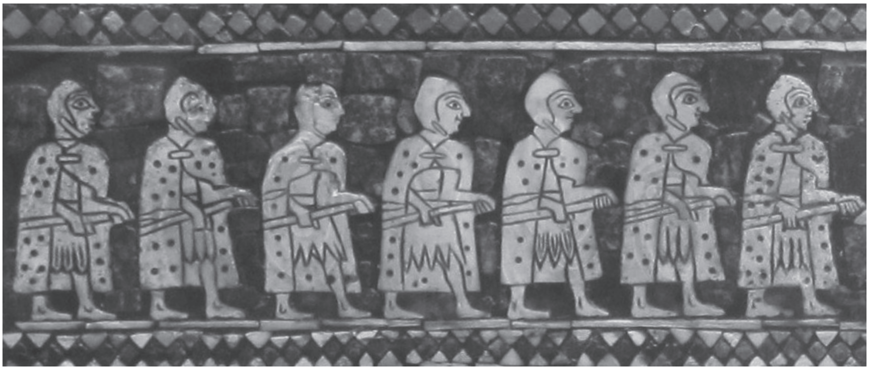

Fig. 7.24. Soldiers from Standard of Ur. British Museum 121201. Photo courtesy of LeastCommonAncestor, Wikimedia Commons.

rior with a helmet that covers the ears (fig. 3.10 and fig. 8.2).[138] Another depiction of a warrior from Hattusa shows a warrior with a similar type of helmet that covers the ears, as well as what appears to be armor covering his upper arms and chest.[139]

7.3.3. Early Mesopotamia

The reliefs of the third millennium (such as the Stele of Vultures and the Standard of Ur) depict ordered infantry carrying large shields and wearing helmets (fig. 7.24).[140] Several soldiers with their helmets were discovered in a grave at Ur from the third millennium (BM 121414).[141] A plaque from Mari from the third millennium depicts an archer pair, with one archer and one shield bearer. The shield is very large so as to protect both of them, with the top curving over the head of the shield bearer.[142] A gold helmet was found at Ur from the third millennium at the tomb of Meskalamdug.[143] The translation of the word *ṣinnatum* at Mari is disputed, but several scholars have argued that it should be translated as a shield (others read it as a spear).[144] An alabaster head of a warrior was found at Mari from the palace of Zimri-Lim with what might be a close-fitting helmet.[145] The Nuzi texts also record several different kinds of helmets.[146]

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[138] *ANEP*, 13, no. 38 (Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:222.

[139] Bryce, *Hittite Warrior*, 16; for an artist's reconstruction of two Hittite warriors with helmets and a shield, see ibid., 33.

[140] *ANEP*, 95, no. 300 (Louvre AO 16109); 97, no. 303 (BM 121201); Yadin, *Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, 1:48–49, 134–35; for more on helmets in the third millennium, see Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, 1–6.

[141] For a picture of another of these helmets, see Aruz, *Art of the First Cities*, 103.

[142] Museum of Deir ez-Zor (Syria); for pictures, see Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 218; Aruz, *Art of the First Cities*, 158.

Scale armor seems to have come into use only about 1500.[147] Although armor appears in the Mari texts, it is unknown how common it was.[148] Important information about armor comes from texts at Nuzi, which describe different kinds of armor.[149] A receipt from Nuzi lists the scales received to build suits of armor; the first few lines read as follows: "5 hundred scales for its body (armor), 5 hundred scales for its sleeves, 2 hundred ditto (i.e., scales) for the helmet. 1 thousand 2 hundred bronze scales Ninki-tešup took."[150] An administrative list from Nuzi includes all the items that did not come back from a battle. The first few lines read as follows: "Tablet of equipment that did not come (back). 10 sets of body armor for a man (and) 5 suits (lit., 'pairs') of body armor for a horse, (all) from the stores (lit., 'belonging to,' 'under the command of') Aru-pašaḫ."[151] Some of the texts seem to refer to armor made only of leather.[152] A fragment of bronze scale armor has also been found at Nuzi.[153]

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[143] *ANEP*, 49, no. 160; the original is in the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, while an electrotype copy can be seen in the Penn Museum (29–22–2); for a color picture, see Strommenger, *5000 Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 15.

[144] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 27; Hamblin, *Warfare in the Ancient Near East to 1600 BC*, 253.

[145] Aleppo Museum; Strommenger, *5000 Years of the Art of Mesopotamia*, pl. 166; however Dezsö does not call this a helmet; see Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, 7.

[146] Tamás Dezső, "Scale Armour of the 2nd Millennium B.C.," in *A Tribute to Excellence: Studies Offered in Honor of Ernő Gaál, Ulrich Luft, László Török*, ed. Tamás A. Bács, Studia Egyptiaca 17 (Budapest: Université Eötvös Lorand de Budapest, 2002), 195–216; Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, 7–17.

[147] Moorey, "Emergence of the Light, Horse-Drawn Chariot," 210–11.

[148] Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 30–31.

[149] For a discussion of armor in these texts, see Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 43–55.

[150] Maidman, *Nuzi Texts and Their Use as Historical Evidence*, 34–35 (HSS XV, 5).

[151] Ibid., 63–64 (HSS XV, 14 + EN 10/3 194).

[152] Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 49.

[153] *ANEP*, 49, no. 161 (Iraq Museum, Baghdad); 345, no. 789 (Iraq Museum,

7.3.4. Assyrian

Helmets were very common in the Assyrian reliefs and exhibited many different designs.[154] Most styles were conical so as to allow downward blows to bounce off, as exemplified by BM 22496 (fig. 7.25), which was most likely discovered at Nimrud.[155] It is made out of one sheet of iron (indicating it might have been used by elite troops) and had holes in the bottom, probably to attach a lining, a chinstrap, or other pieces of armor. Other helmets that have been discovered were made of bronze; since they were cheaper they were probably used by regular soldiers. Helmets were usually made of sheet metal attached with rivets. The Urartian helmet shown below (fig. 7.26) is another example of a conical helmet.[156]

Most troops also carried shields of some kind (fig. 7.27).[157] The shields were mostly made of metal (though some might have been made from wickerwork).[158] They ranged in size from small circular shields that were carried by soldiers into battle to large shields with a flat bottom that could be rested on the ground during a siege (fig. 7.17 above), similar in shape to shields often used by riot police today.[159] Not only could the

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Baghdad); for more on the armor found at Nuzi, see Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 76–86.

[154] For a detailed study of Assyrian helmets, see Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*; see also Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 37–44; Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 179–201; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 231–32; Llop, "Weaponry of the Middle Assyrian Army," 201–2.

[155] For a study of this helmet, see Tamás Dezső and John Curtis, "Assyrian Iron Helmets from Nimrud Now in the British Museum," *Iraq* 53 (1991): 105–26; Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, 33–37.

[156] On this helmet, see Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, 82–86.

[157] Madhloum, *Chronology of Neo-Assyrian Art*, 54–58; Dubovský, "Neo-Assyrian Warfare," 64–65; Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 113–46; Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 232–33; Llop, "Weaponry of the Middle Assyrian Army," 203–4; for a detailed study of Neo-Assyrian shields, including a typology and many illustrations, see De Backer, *Neo-Assyrian Shield*.

[158] Few shields have been found archaeologically due to their composition; if they were metal, they were valued and not left behind; if they were wicker or some other organic material they have disappeared; for the shields that have been found in Assyria, see Barron, "Later Assyrian Arms and Armour," 113–19.

[159] The modern comparison to riot police is from De Backer, *The Neo-Assyrian Shield*, 7–8.

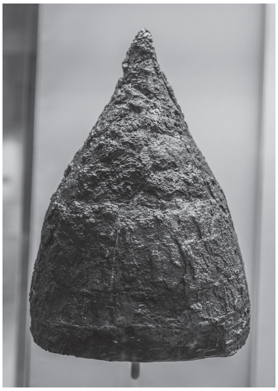
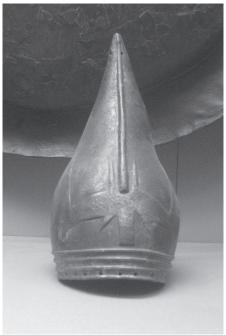


Fig. 7.25. Assyrian helmet. BM 22496. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

Fig. 7.26. Urartian helmet. BM 135061. Picture courtesy of Claire H., Wikimedia Commons.



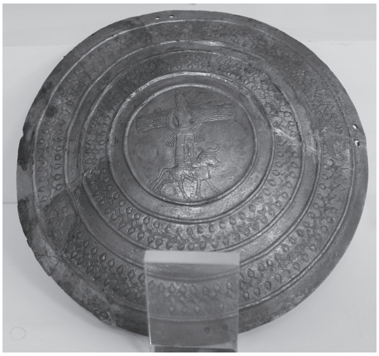


Fig. 7.27. Urartian shield. Van Museum. Photo courtesy of A.D. Riddle, Bible-Places.com.

smaller shields help protect the warrior, but they could also be used as weapons by themselves.[160]

According to the reliefs, many soldiers wore scale armor, which usually covered only the chest area, but sometimes extended to their ankles or necks.[161] Sennacherib repeatedly refers to wearing armor: “I raged up like a lion, then put on armor (and) placed a helmet suitable for combat on my head.”[162] Many scales (iron and bronze in equal amounts) have been found at Nimrud (fig. 7.28).[163] The British Museum also has Assyrian scale armor found in western Iran (fig. 7.29).

7.3.5. Later Empires

A helmet from the late second millennium has been recovered from Elam with three figures on the front, perhaps deities to protect the wearer (fig. 7.30). Little is known about the armor of the Neo-Babylonians or the Persians.[164] A few helmets have been recovered which were most likely Persian; they resemble the Assyrian helmets.[165] Herodotus describes the equipment of the Persians as including scale armor and wicker shields (7.61). According to Xenophon, Cyrus and his officers wore bronze corselets and helmets (*Cyr.* 7.1.2).

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[160] For examples, see ibid., 104.

[161] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 231–32; Barron, “Later Assyrian Arms and Armour,” 167–74; to account for the discrepancy between the small number of scales found archaeologically and the large number of soldiers wearing armor in the reliefs, Barron appeals to Hulit’s theory about the majority of scale armor being made of leather.

[162] RINAP 3.1:154, 18, v.11’–15’.

[163] Barron, “Later Assyrian Arms and Armour,” 158–65; for another example, see BM 132699; for futher studies of Assyrian armor, see Fabrice De Backer, “Scale-Armours in the Neo-Assyrian Period: A Survey,” *SAAB* 19 (2011): 175–202; De Backer, *Scale-Armour in the Neo-Assyrian Period: Manufacture and Maintenance* (Saarbrücken: Lambert Academic, 2013); Llop, “Weaponry of the Middle Assyrian Army,” 202–3.

[164] For the few references in the Sippar archives, see Kleber, “Zu Waffen und Ausrüstung babylonischer Soldaten,” 442–44.

[165] Dezső, *Near Eastern Helmets of the Iron Age*, 107–11.

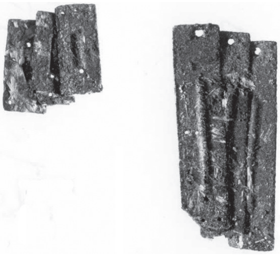

Fig. 7.28. Assyrian scale armor. Metropolitan 59.107.28a–c. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

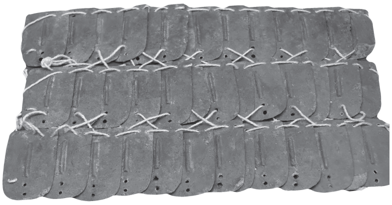

Fig. 7.29. Scale armor from Western Iran. British Museum 135236. Photo courtesy of Todd Bolen, BiblePlaces.com.

7.3.6. West Semitic

Although the Old Testament contains only one reference to an Israelite helmet (כובע) (2 Chr 26:14), many Israelite soldiers in Sennacherib's relief are wearing helmets.[166] Two portions of helmets have been found at Lachish.[167] Various Neo-Hittite reliefs depict soldiers wearing helmets.[168] The Old Testament contains two words for shields, perhaps differentiating large shields (צנה) from small shields (מגן).[169] The Sennacherib reliefs of the attack on Lachish portray a few different kinds of Israelite shields, while Neo-Hittite reliefs also depict soldiers holding shields.[170]

Dowry lists in two of the Amarna letters (EA 22 and 24) record that both metal and leather armor was included as part of the dowry.[171] Thutmose III took bronze armor from the Canaanites he fought at Megiddo.[172] A minimal number of bronze scales (and even fewer iron scales) have been found in the area from Iron II, mostly at Megiddo.[173] However, an important collection

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[166] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 64–65.

[167] Emery, "Weapons of the Israelite Monarchy," 103–4.

[168] See, e.g., BM C.145; BM C.213

[169] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 64.

[170] See, e.g., BM C.148; BM 117102.

[171] Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 62–63.

[172] *COS* 2.2A:12; Hulit suggests that only the two mail coats specifically referred as bronze were metal and that the others were made of leather; see Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 64–65.

[173] Emery, "Weapons of the Israelite Monarchy," 100–103.

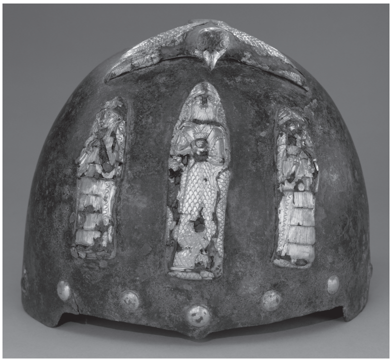

Fig. 7.30. Middle Elamite helmet with divine figures. Metropolitan 63.74. Photo courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

of scales was found at Kamid el-Loz (about forty miles inland from Sidon) from the Late Bronze Age.[174] The Egyptian reliefs of Ramesses III depict the Sea People wearing armor.[175] However, Israelite armor is rare, appearing only with wealthy and powerful soldiers, such as Saul (1 Sam 17:38) and Ahab (1 Kgs 22:34). Uzziah supplied his army with armor (2 Chr 26:14).[176] The Lachish reliefs do not depict any Israelite armor on the soldiers or as plunder.[177] Most famously, Goliath's armor (שריון קשקשים) has attracted much attention (1 Sam 17:5).[178]

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[174] For a study, see Hulit, "Late Bronze Age Scale Armour in the Near East," 65–76; see also the catalogue in his dissertation for other scales found in the area (such as Beth Shean, Megiddo, and Gezer) from the Late Bronze Age.

[175] For a study of this armor, see ibid., 43–44, 250–55.

[176] For a discussion of the biblical texts referring to armor, see ibid., 56–62.

[177] Seevers, *Warfare in the Old Testament*, 65.

[178] Israel Finkelstein, "The Philistines in the Bible: A Late-Monarchic Perspective," *JSOT* 27 (2002): 131–67; Azzan Yadin, "Goliath's Armor and Israelite Collective Memory," *VT* 54 (2004): 373–95; Philip J. King, "David Defeats Goliath," in Crawford, *"Up to the Gates of Ekron,"* 350–57; Alan R. Millard, "The Armor of Goliath," in Schoen, *Exploring the Longue Durée*, 337–44; Moshe Garsiel, "The Valley of Elah Battle and the Duel of David with Goliath: Between History and Artistic Theological Historiography," in Galil, *Homeland and Exile*, 391–426; Jeffrey R. Zorn, "Reconsidering Goliath: An Iron Age I Philistine Chariot Warrior," *BASOR* 360 (2010): 1–22; James K. Hoffmeier, "David's Triumph over Goliath: 1 Samuel 17:54 and Ancient Near Eastern Analogues," in *Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature: Proceedings of a Conference at the University of Haifa, 3–7 May 2009*, ed. Shay Bar, Dan'el Kahn, and Judith J. Shirley, CHANE 52 (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 87–114; Rodan, *Aegean Mercenaries in Light of the Bible*, 29–49.

8
Divine Warriors

The final topical study focuses on the image of a divine warrior, a prominent motif throughout the ancient Near East. Even though Gerhard von Rad argued in his seminal work on warfare in the Old Testament that the idea of a holy war was unique to the Israelites ("Baals do not conduct holy wars"), scholars after von Rad quickly contested this aspect of his argument, beginning with Manfred Weippert's illustration of similar motifs in Assyrian texts.[1] All armies in the ancient Near East viewed warfare as fundamentally religious. Kings and warriors frequently praised the divine warriors, called on them for help, received messages from them, lamented their occasional divine abandonment, gratefully accepted divine weapons (linking their actions with the tales of divine combat), and saw their hand in battle. However, since religion in the ancient Near East is a far-ranging area of study, this chapter (even more than the other chapters in this book) can only begin to scratch the surface of the involvement of the divine in warfare.

8.1. Divine Combat

At the most general level, many deities throughout the ancient Near East were described as divine warriors in both hymns and in images. Many cultures throughout the ancient Near East recorded stories of divine combat in which the gods fought each other or a monster to bring order to the world (often called a conflict or *Chaoskampf* myth). In other accounts, the divine beings compete with each other for supremacy or a particular goal. This section will provide a few examples of these texts and images to provide a glimpse of the martial tone of much of ancient Near Eastern religion. In particular, the storm god is a popular motif found in various part of the ancient Near East, especially in the West Semitic world.[2]

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[1] Von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, 63–64; Manfred Weippert, "'Heiliger Krieg' in Israel und Assyrien: Kritische Anmerkungen zu Gerhard von Rads Konzept des 'Heiligen Krieges im alten Israel,'" *ZAW* 84 (1972): 460–93.

8.1.1. Egyptian

Examples abound of hymns praising the gods for their martial activity. Kheruef was a steward in the household of Queen Tiyi during the time of Amenhotep III. In his tomb he praised Re for his defeat of rebels.

> [You] traverse [the sky], your [heart] being joyful, for the Lake of the Two Knives has become peaceful and the rebel has fallen, his arms bound, knives having severed his [vertebrae]. As to the One with the Evil Disposition, [his] movements have been checked, and your enemies are fallen [at] the place of their massacre. As for the gods, their hearts are glad when they see you in the morning bark. (They say): "Re has a breeze continually." As for the evening bark, it has destroyed the one who attacked it. You cross both your heavens in triumph while your Ennead appears in your following.[3]

The Leiden Hymns (written during the time of Ramesses II) refer frequently to the gods acting as divine warriors, such as the following text about the goddess Raiyt and her protection of Thebes. "Who makes Thebes victorious over every city that she may offer this earth to the one Lord through her might; Who seizes the bow, grasps the arrow—no fighting occurs near her because of her strength."[4] The martial ability of Amun-Re also receives attention in the Leiden Hymns. "Fierce lion who rends with his claws, drinks down in an instant the power and blood of attackers; Strong bull, sturdy-backed, with crushing hooves on the neck of his enemy, tearing his breast; Bird of prey soaring on high, seizing whoever attacks him, who knows how to crush his limbs and his bones."[5] As will be described below, a common motif of Egyptian art is the passing of a divine weapon to the pharaoh. One relief of Resheph depicts him holding an axe, a spear, and a shield.[6] A stela from Tell el-Borg shows both Resheph and Astarte as warriors, standing in a menacing stance with their weapons.[7] A stela from Ramesside times shows the donor (Pentawer) being rescued from a crocodile by a local deity (Wepwawet) with a spear.[8] Montu appeared in a relief from his temple Medamud near Karnak dressed in scale armor.[9]

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[2] For recent scholarship on the motif, see Daniel Schwemer, *Die Wettergottgestalten Mesopotamiens und Nordsyriens im Zeitalter der Keilschriftkulturen: Materialien und Studien nach den schriftlichen Quellen* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2001); Alberto R. W. Green, *The Storm-God in the Ancient Near East*, BJSUCSD 8 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003); Schwemer, "The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Summary, Synthesis, Recent Studies: Part I," *JANER* 7 (2007): 121–68; Schwemer, "The Storm-Gods of the Ancient Near East: Summary, Synthesis, Recent Studies: Part II," *JANER* 8 (2008): 1–44.

[3] Murnane, *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt*, 59–60 (Theban Tomb 192); see also Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 41–42.

[4] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 69.

Egyptian texts often refer to divine combat.[10] In one text (The Destruction of Mankind), humans revolted against Re and he sent the "Eye of Re" to begin destroying them. But then he had mercy on the people and deceived the eye by causing the fields to be flooded with a blood-like beer that distracted the Eye and prevented her from seeing the humans to destroy them.[11] The first paragraph of the Book of the Dead 175 also records a battle among the children of Nut.

> "O Thoth, what is it that has happened? It is among the children of Nut. They have made an uproar; they have seized upon quarreling; they have done evil deeds; they have created rebellion; they have made slaughterings;

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[5] Ibid., 78.

[6] *ANEP*, 164, no. 476 (Oriental Institute 10569); for more on this Syrian god as a divine warrior in Egypt, see Maciej M. Münnich, *The God Resheph in the Ancient Near East*, ORA 11 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 111–19.

[7] James K. Hoffmeier and Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Reshep and Astarte in North Sinai: A Recently Discovered Stela from Tell El-Borg," *AeL* 27 (2007): 127–36.

[8] Keel, *Symbolism of the Biblical World*, 224 (BM 1632).

[9] The relief today is in the Karnak Open Air Museum; pictures of the relief can readily be found online.

[10] For recent studies of the conflict myth in Egypt, see Joanna Töyräänvuori, "The Northwest Semitic Conflict Myth and Egyptian Sources from the Middle and New Kingdoms," in *Creation and Chaos: A Reconsideration of Hermann Gunkel's Chaoskampf Hypothesis*, ed. JoAnn Scurlock and Richard H. Beal (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 112–26; Noga Ayali-Darshan, "The Other Version of the Story of the Storm-God's Combat with the Sea in the Light of Egyptian, Ugaritic, and Hurro-Hittite Texts," *JANER* 15 (2015): 31–35; Ayali-Darshan, *Treading on the Back of the Sea: The Combat between the Storm-God and the Sea in Ancient Near Eastern Literature* [Hebrew], BEL 33 (Jerusalem: Bialik, 2016), 21–54.

[11] *COS* 1.24:36–37; *AEL* 2:198–99; *ANET*, 10–11.

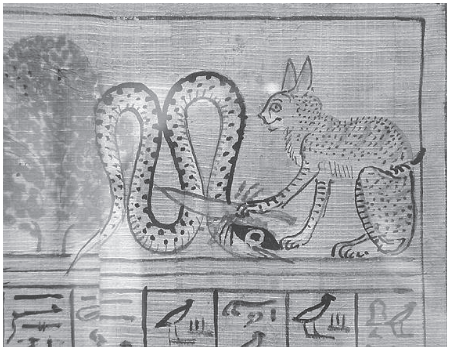

Fig. 8.1. Amun as cat-killing snake in papyrus of Hunefer. British Museum EA9901. Photo courtesy of Jon Bodsworth, Wikimedia Commons.

> they have created imprisonment. Moreover, in everything which we might do, they have made the great into the small. Give thou greatly, Thoth!" Thus spoke Atum.[12]

The battle against the sea appears rarely in Egyptian literature. The Instructions of Merikare briefly refer to the defeat of the sea creature and connects it with creation. "He made sky and earth for their sake, He subdued the water monster, He made breath for their noses to live."[13] The Astarte Papyrus includes a fragmentary battle against the sea that appears similar to Hittite accounts of the battle.[14] However, one of the most important divine combat myths in Egypt was the nightly battle with Apophis. Every evening Re traveled in his ship in the underworld and was attacked by the serpent Apophis, but Re was protected from attack and returned each morning to Egypt. Many rituals in Egyptian culture were designed to ensure Re's victory each evening.[15] In some paintings Amun appears as a cat attacking Apophis (who appears as a snake) (fig. 8.1).[16] Horemheb praised Thoth in a hymn for his role in protecting Re during the night from the Rebel-Serpent.[17] Other paintings depict Seth standing in the boat protecting Amun against Apophis in the form of a snake.

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[12] *ANET*, 9; also *COS* 1.18:28.

[13] *COS* 1.35:65; see also *AEL* 1:98–107; *ANET*, 414–18.

[14] For details (and the argument that the Egyptian and Hittite accounts represent an earlier version of the combat myth), see Ayali-Darshan, "Other Version of the Story," 31–42; Ayali-Darshan, *Treading on the Back of the Sea*, 21–54.

[15] For various versions of this battle, see *COS* 1.21:32; *ANET*, 6–7, 11–12, 252–53, 365–67; Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 80–98.

[16] *ANEP*, 218, no. 669.

[17] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 111–12; see also *AEL* 2:102–3.

Another famous myth is the conflict between Horus and Seth, in which the two compete for the position of taking the kinship after Osiris. They engage in a variety of competitions (but not directly fighting each other), and even though Seth reminds Osiris that he defends the sun god every night, Horus is made the king.[18]

8.1.2. Hittite

Although the Hittites recorded many rituals, they appear to have written very few hymns.[19] Likewise, few reliefs remain from the Hittites. An armed being at the King's Gate at Hattusa might have been a god (fig. 8.2 is the original relief in a museum; a picture of the original location of the relief at a gate with a replica of the relief is fig. 3.10). In a relief at Yazılıkaya, a series of identical divine beings hold sickle swords (see fig. 7.5).[20] A relief of Tudhaliya IV, also at Yazılıkaya, shows a deity protecting him (fig. 8.3).[21]

However, many Hittite myths incorporate divine combat.[22] The Illuyanka tales, two Old Hittite tales, describe the battle between the Storm God and the serpent in which the Storm God is unable to defeat the serpent. In one version of the tale, the Storm God fathers a child of a poor woman, and the child enables the Storm God to be victorious. (In another version of the tale, the Storm God calls on help from Inara, who tricked the serpent with a feast and making him drunk.[23])

> [First] the serpent defeated [the Storm God] and took [his heart and eyes], and the Storm God [feared(?)] him. So he took as his wife the

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[18] *AEL* 2:214–23; Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 92–103.

[19] For a fragment of a hymn to the Storm-God, see Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 107 (*CTH* 386.2).

[20] *ANEP*, 182, no. 539 (Yazılıkaya).

[21] For an artist's reconstruction of how the relief might have originally appeared, see Nossov, *Hittite Fortifications*, 50.

[22] For a recent study of various Hittite and Hurrian combat myths (including many fragments not summarized here) and how they relate to other forms of the combat myth found elsewhere, see Ayali-Darshan, "Other Version of the Story," 23–31; Ayali-Darshan, *Treading on the Back of the Sea*, 55–96.

[23] Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, 11–12 (*CTH* 321).

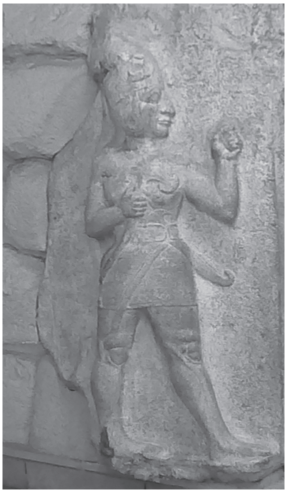

Fig. 8.2 (left). Hittite deity at Hattusa. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara, Turkey. Photo by Rita1234, Wikimedia Commons.

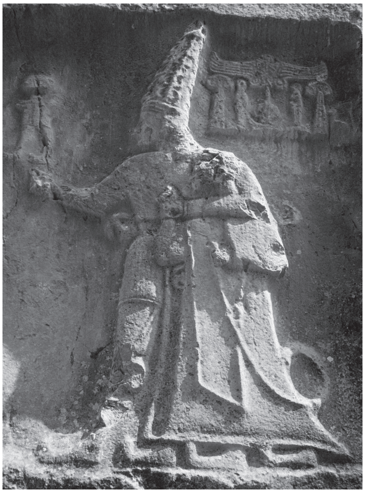

Fig. 8.3 (right). Hittite deity protecting Tudhaliya IV. Yazılıkaya, Turkey. Photo by Klaus-Peter Simon, Wikimedia Commons.

> daughter of a poor man and sired a son. When (the son) grew up, he took the daughter of the serpent as his wife. The Storm God repeatedly instructed him: “When you go (to live in) the house of your wife, demand from them (my) heart and eyes (as a bride-price).” So when he went, he demanded from them the heart, and they gave it to him. After that he demanded from them the eyes, and they gave those too to him. He brought them to his father, the Storm God, and the Storm God took back (his) heart and his eyes. When he was again sound in body as before, he went again to the sea to do battle. When he gave him battle, and he at last began to defeat the serpent, the Storm God’s son was with the serpent and called up to his father in the sky: “Include me with them; have no pity on me.” So the Storm God killed (both) the serpent and his own son.[24]

Another Hittite myth, Telipinu and the Daughter of the Sea God, describes a divine conflict in which the Sea God fought with the Sun God, brought him down from heaven, and hid him. The resultant darkness caused distress in the land because none could defeat the Sea God until the Storm

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[24] Ibid., 13 (*CTH* 321); see also *COS* 1.56:150–51; *ANET*, 125–26.

God Telipinu confronted him and forced him not only to return the Sun God but also give his own daughter to the Storm.[25] In the Old Hittite myth "When the Storm God Thunders Frightfully," the Moon God fell from the sky and was chased by the Storm God with rain.[26] The Old Hittite myth "The Disappearance of the Sun God" tells how the Storm God enters into conflict with a chaos creature identified as Frost when the Sea God trapped the Sun God. "Frost has paralyzed the entire land. He has dried up the waters. Frost is great." When it was discovered that the Sun God was missing, the Storm God sent the War God, but Frost seized him, along with several other deities sent (including Telipinu, the son of the Storm God). The end of the tale is unclear.[27]

The Song of Kumarbi, a Hurrian myth preserved in Hittite, marks the beginning of the Kumarbi cycle. The beginning of the story describes how Alalu was king in heaven for nine years until Anu (his cupbearer) defeated him in battle and Alalu fled to the "Dark Earth." Kumarbi, the offspring of Alalu, served as cupbearer for Anu for nine years until Anu attacked him. Kumarbi defeated him and bit him, but while biting him he swallowed part of Anu's manhood, which resulted in the birth of several deities. The tale continues with the account of these various gods.[28]

8.1.3. Early Mesopotamian

A hymn to Papulegarra contains several dramatic images of the god as a divine warrior, describing him as a dragon spewing foam, a raging fire, an iron meteorite, swamp fire, and a wide range of weapons (i.e., arrow, saw, and dagger). The reason for his martial activity was to stop the wicked from mistreating the innocent.[29] Ishtar, the goddess of war, is depicted in one seal from the third millennium with her foot on a lion and holding a leash attached to its head.[30] Also from the third millennium, a relief from Iran shows Ishtar before the king Anubanini holding a rope attached to the lip ring of a prisoner.[31] A storm god holding two lightning bolts in his left hand while standing on a bull is from early second millennium Babylon (fig. 8.4).

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[25] Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, 26–27 (*CTH* 322).

[26] Ibid., 35–36 (*CTH* 727).

[27] Ibid., 27–28 (*CTH* 323).

[28] Ibid., 42–43 (*CTH* 344); also *COS* 4.6A:39–44.

[29] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 93–94.

[30] *ANEP*, 177, no. 526 (Oriental Instituate A 27903).

[31] *ANEP*, 177, no. 524 (Zohab, Iran).

Many tales incorporate divine combat in early Mesopotamia. The Sumerian poem Enmerkar and En-suhgir-ana tells of the conflict between Enmerkar, the quasidivine ruler of Unug, and his opponent En-suhgir-ana in Aratta. The first conflict recounts their debate about their relationship with Inana, while the second conflict involves a sorcerer who inverts the natural order for the ruler of Aratta, causing harm to the milk and butter of the land. The third contest depicts the two combatants fighting by means of animals created through the throwing of fish spawn into water (the first two rounds of the contest are included below). Enmerkar has enlisted the help of the wise woman Sag-buru. The poem ends with the line "In the contest between Enmerkar and En-suḫgir-ana, Enmerkar proved superior to En-suḫgir-ana. Praise be to Nisaba!"

> Both of them threw fish spawn (?) into the river. The sorcerer made a giant carp come out from the water. Wise Woman Sag-buru, however, made an eagle come out from the water. The eagle seized the giant carp and fled to the mountains.
>
> A second time they threw fish spawn (?) into the river. The sorcerer made a ewe and its lamb come out from the water. Wise Woman Sag-buru, however, made a wolf come out from the water. The wolf seized the ewe and its lamb and dragged them to the wise desert.[32]

Another tale (Ninurta's Exploits) tells of the battle of Ninurta and his mace Shar-ur against the demon Asag and his army.[33] The Sumerian text Inana and Ebih describes the warrior goddess Inana's defeat of the mountains of Ebih that refuse to bow down to her.[34] However, the most famous story of divine combat in Mesopotamia is Enuma Elish, the Babylonian myth describing the creation of the world and the elevation of Marduk to eternal kingship. The original gods (Apsu and Tiamat) created the other gods, but when these gods became noisy, Apsu decided to kill them off. Ea, the great grandson of Apsu and Tiamat, killed Apsu to prevent this from happening, and after his victory sired Marduk. Marduk's toy (the winds, a gift from his grandfather Anu), roiled Tiamat, who attempted

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[32] Black et al., *Literature of Ancient Sumer*, 9–11.

[33] Ibid., 164–71.

[34] Ibid., 334–38.

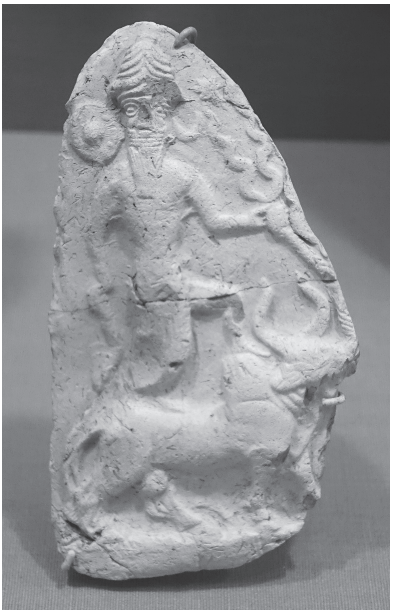

Fig. 8.4. Storm God from Babylon. Oriental Institute DSC07416. Photo courtesy of Daderot, Wikimedia Commons.

to annihilate the gods by enlisting Qingu to be her general (and husband) and Mother Hubur to form troops for her. None of the gods could withstand her except for Marduk, who was willing to fight her only if the divine council gave him eternal kingship over the gods. When they agreed, Marduk defeated her in battle and created the world from her body (humans were also created from the blood of the defeated general Qingu). The myth ends with the establishment of Babylon as the city of Marduk and the glorification of Marduk as the king of the gods.[35] As part of the annual Akitu festival Babylonians read Enuma Elish publicly to emphasize the power of Marduk.[36]

Another famous myth from Babylon is Atrahasis, often called the Babylonian flood story. The gods rebelled against Enlil (the chief god), refusing to do any work. Enlil killed one of the gods and created humans from the blood of the god and from clay to give them the tasks formerly done by the gods. However, when the humans multiplied and created noise that prevented him from sleeping, Enlil attempted to punish them through plague, drought, and famine. Finally, he sent a flood against the humans to wipe them out. Enki, however, instructed Atrahasis to build a boat, leading to his survival.[37]

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[35] *COS* 1.111:390–402; *ANET*, 60–72, 501–3; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 436–86.

[36] For more details on the Akitu festival, see *ANET*, 331–34; Bidmead, *Akītu Festival.*

Many other texts also tell of divine combat. Anzu tells the story of the bird Anzu that took the Tablet of Destinies from Enlil; none of the gods desired to fight to return it until Ninurta volunteered and completed the task.[38] A fragmentary text describes a massive serpent that ate all kinds of creatures, including humans.[39] Another fragmentary text describes the call to Tishpak to kill a lion-serpent that is causing chaos in the world.[40] Various reliefs and seals depict these cosmic struggles, including a cylinder seal with several gods fighting each other, a shell plaque depicting a god fighting a seven-headed monster and a third-millennium seal depicting two gods fighting a seven-headed dragon.[41]

8.1.4. Assyrian

For the most part, the Assyrians emphasized the divine combat tales already mentioned in the previous section, most notably developing their own version of Enuma Elish that replaced Marduk with the Assyrian deity Assur.[42] Reliefs sometimes depicted a form of divine warfare. A relief from Nimrud depicts a deity (Ninurta) armed with swords and lightning chasing off a composite creature.[43] A seal shows Assur attacking a monster (fig. 8.5). A relief by Tukulti-Ninurta II at Sirqu (Tell Ashara) drew on local customs (it might have been made earlier and adapted by the Assyrian king) to depict a deity holding a snake and preparing to smite it with an axe.[44]

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[37] *COS* 1.130:450–52; *ANET*, 104–6, 512–14; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 227–80.

[38] *COS* 3.147:327–34; *ANET*, 514–17; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 555–76.

[39] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 579–80.

[40] Ibid., 581–82

[41] Cylinder seal: Aruz, *Art of the First Cities*, 216 (Metropolitan L.1992.23.4); shell plaque: *ANEP*, 218, no. 671 (collection of E. Borowski); seal: ibid., 221, no. 691 (Iraq Museum); the Oriental Institute fears that this has been stolen; see http://tinyurl.com/SBL0394j.

[42] W. G. Lambert, "The Assyrian Recension of *Enuma Eliš*," in Waetzoldt, *Assyrien Im Wandel Der Zeiten*, 77–79; Debra Scoggins Ballentine, *The Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 39–48.

[43] *ANEP*, 213, no. 651 (BM 124571).

[44] For details and pictures, see Cristina Bellino and Ada Vallorani, "The Stele of

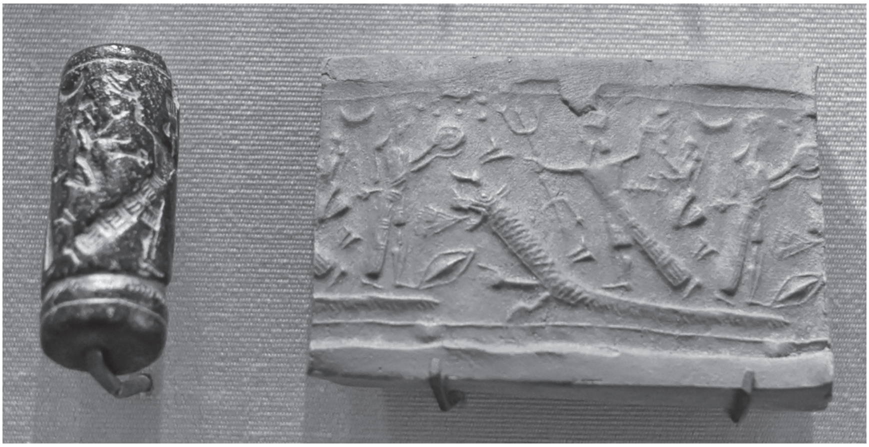

Fig. 8.5. Assur attacking a monster. Louvre AO 30255. Photo courtesy of Marie-Lan Nguyen, Wikimedia Commons.

8.1.5. Later Empires

The motif of a divine warrior is downplayed in extant Babylonian literature (as many other martial aspects are). Likewise, although according to Persian texts the Persian god Ahura Mazda played a role in battle, he is not often described as a divine warrior himself, nor is he depicted as a divine warrior in the images from the Persian Empire (though he appears in martial contexts blessing the Persian king, such as the Bisitun relief). Knowledge about divine combat myths is also minimal for both empires, though it appears that the Akitu festival (connected with Enuma Elish) continued to be celebrated throughout the entire time period.[45]

8.1.6. West Semitic

West Semitic literature frequently described their gods in martial terms. Hymns praising the martial ability of YHWH are common throughout the

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Tell Ashara: The Neo-Syrian Perspective," in *Proceedings of the Fifth International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East: Madrid, April 3–8 2006*, ed. Joaquín Ma Córdoba et al. (Madrid: Centro Superior de Estudios sobre el Oriente Próximo Antiguo, 2008), 1:273–83; Younger, *Political History of the Arameans*, 282–85.

[45] Bidmead, *Akītu Festival*, 130–43.

Old Testament.[46] One of the most famous is the Song of the Sea, included in Exodus after the Red Sea crossing, which begins with the following lines: "I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my might, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him. The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is his name" (Exod 15:1–3 NRSV). Another well-known example is 2 Sam 22 (parallel to Ps 18).

Several reliefs depicting divine warriors have been uncovered. The well-known *Baal au foudre* depicts him standing on mountains (or water) and holding a club in his right hand and in his left hand a staff whose top looks like a tree or lightning (fig. 8.6).[47] Various gods holding weapons and shields have been recovered from Megiddo.[48] The god Milqart appears holding an axe.[49] Two Neo-Hittite stela from Til Barsip (near Carchemish) depict a weather god holding an axe in one hand and in the other three-pronged lightning.[50] A very similar relief was discovered at the same location in 2000 and is now also in the Aleppo Museum (fig. 8.7).[51] A stela from Arslan Tash depicts the god Adad standing on a bull holding lightning bolts in both hands (fig. 8.8).[52]

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[46] For studies on the divine warrior in the Psalms, see Marc Zvi Brettler, "Images of YHWH the Warrior in Psalms," *Semeia* 61 (1993): 135–65; Harold Ballard Jr., *The Divine Warrior Motif in the Psalms*, BDS 6 (North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL, 1999); Martin Klingbeil, *Yahweh Fighting from Heaven: God as Warrior and as God of Heaven in the Hebrew Psalter and Ancient Near Eastern Iconography*, OBO 169 (Fribourg: Presses Universitaires; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999).

[47] *ANEP*, 168, no. 490 (Louvre AO 15775); for more on this relief, see Susan J. Sanders, "*Baal Au Foudre*: The Iconography of Baal of Ugarit," in *"He Unfurrowed His Brow and Laughed": Essays in Honour of Professor Nicolas Wyatt*, ed. Wilfred G. E. Watson, AOAT 299 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2007), 249–66.

[48] *ANEP*, 169, nos. 494 (Oriental Institute A 18331), 496 (Rockefeller Museum).

[49] *ANEP*, 170, no. 499 (National Museum in Aleppo); for a study of the origin of the axe and lightning in the hands of the storm god in these reliefs, see Olga Zolotnikova, "The Storm-God with a Battle-Axe on the Early First Millennium BC Reliefs from Eastern Anatolia/Northern Syria," in Kaelin, *Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress*, 1:295–306.

[50] *ANEP*, 179, nos. 531 (Aleppo Museum), 532 (Louvre AO 11505).

[51] For more on this stela (and common motifs in reliefs of the storm god), see Guy Bunnens, *Tell Ahmar II: A New Luwian Stele and the Cult of the Storm-God at Til Barsib-Masuwari*, PMAULS (Louvain: Peeters, 2006).

[52] *ANEP*, 170, no. 501 (Louvre AO 13092).

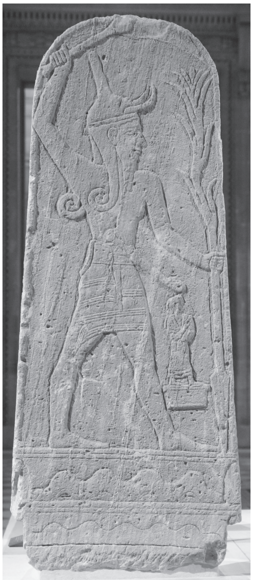

Fig. 8.6. Baal at Ugarit. Louvre AO 15775. Photo courtesy of Marie-Lan Nguyen, Wikimedia Commons.

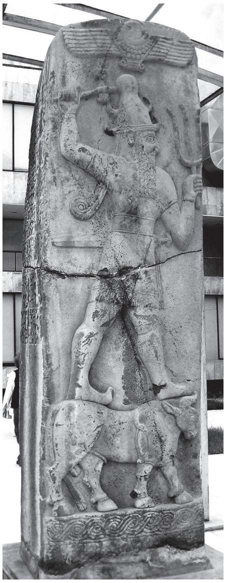

Fig. 8.7. Neo-Hittite Storm God. Aleppo Museum, Syria. Photo courtesy of Verity Cridland, Wikimedia Commons.

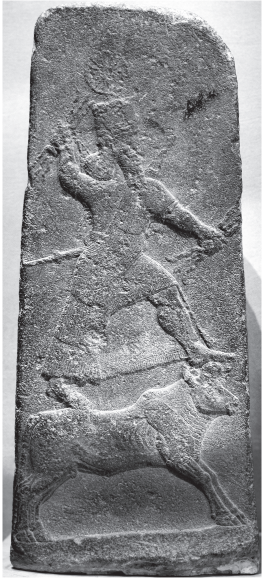

Fig. 8.8. Adad on a bull from Arslan Tash. Louvre AO 13092. Photo courtesy of Rama, Wikimedia Commons.

The most famous West Semitic account of divine combat is the Baal Cycle. El (the chief god) allowed his son Yam to take Baal hostage, but Baal killed Yam's messengers and engendered conflict between the two sons of El. With the help of weapons made by Kothar wa-Hasis, Baal defeated Yam and became king, building himself a house and holding a feast for the gods to celebrate. However, he then challenged Mot (in an act of hubris?) to battle. Mot defeated him and Baal went to Mot's home, during which time agriculture did not function as it should when Baal (the storm god) was not present. Eventually Anat (Baal's sister) rescued Baal, leading to a hand-to-hand struggle between Baal and Mot. Upon Baal's victory, Mot recognized the superiority of Baal.[53]

Since the Old Testament portrays a monotheistic worldview, divine combat is largely missing. Many have seen parallels between Enuma Elish and the creation account, but the lack of a creation account in most *Chaoskampf* accounts hinders this connection.[54] More commonly, YHWH has been seen in combat against such beings as Leviathan (Isa 27:1), Rahab (Ps 89:10 [ET 9]), and the *tannin*, usually viewed as sea monsters (Ps 74:13), though others have disputed even these connections.[55] The motif appears as well in such places as the exodus: "For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both human beings and animals; on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord" (Exod 12:12 NRSV). In the context of Exodus, this is most likely a reference to YHWH's attack on the pharaoh, who was the representative of the Egyptian gods.[56]

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[53] *COS* 1.86:241–74; *ANET*, 129–42; Mark S. Smith, "The Baal Cycle," in Parker, *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 81–180; Smith, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle: Volume 1: Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU 1.1–1.2*, VTSup 55 (Leiden: Brill, 1994); Smith and Wayne T. Pitard, *Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU/CAT 1.3–1.*4. Vol. 2 of The *Ugaritic Baal Cycle*, VTSup 114 (Leiden: Brill, 2009).

[54] For the classic argument, see Hermann Gunkel, *Creation and Chaos in the Primeval Era and the Eschaton: A Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 1 and Revelation 12*, trans. K. William Whitney Jr., BRS (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006); others see better parallels with Genesis 3; see Richard E. Averbeck, "Ancient Near Eastern Mythography as It Relates to Historiography in the Hebrew Bible: Genesis 3 and the Cosmic Battle," in *The Future of Biblical Archaeology: Reassessing Methodologies and Assumptions*, ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Alan Millard (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 328–56.

[55] For the view that they are sea monsters, see Frank Moore Cross, *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973); Miller, *Divine Warrior in Early Israel*; Carola Kloos, *Yhwh's Combat with the Sea: A Canaanite Tradition in the Religion of Ancient Israel* (Amsterdam: van Oorschot, 1986); Bernard F. Batto, *Slaying the Dragon: Mythmaking in the Biblical Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992); Eric Ortlund, *Theophany and* Chaoskampf*: The Interpretation of Theophanic Imagery in the Baal Epic, Isaiah, and the Twelve*, GUS 5 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2010); Ballentine, *Con-*

Although the motif of a battle between a deity and a monster was common in texts, it appears in few reliefs from the time (mostly Neo-Hittite), perhaps because the local iconography preferred static themes rather than narrative.[57] Two examples include a relief showing a deity attacking a dragon (fig. 8.9) and a relief from Malatya in which two deities armed with spears, swords, and clubs attack a serpent-dragon.[58]

8.2. Calls for Divine Help

Since the deities were powerful warriors, it was natural that many warriors and kings called on their deities for help before and during battle. Raising hands was a common act to symbolize prayer as kings called on deities before battle. In the religious environment of the ancient Near East, most armies performed rituals before battle to curry the favor of the gods for their cause. These rituals varied greatly across the cultures, but they often employed imitation in which the desired result of the battle was illustrated in the ritual. A specific form of calling for divine help was a curse, in which the gods witnessing the treaty were called to harm those who broke the treaty.[59]

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flict Myth and the Biblical Tradition; Ayali-Darshan, *Treading on the Back of the Sea*, 205–60. For an alternate view, see Rebecca Sally Watson, *Chaos Uncreated: A Reassessment of the Theme of "Chaos" in the Hebrew Bible*, BZAW 341 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2005); David Toshio Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction: A Reappraisal of the* Chaoskampf *Theory in the Old Testament* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005).

[56] Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt*, 151–55; Charlie Trimm, *"YHWH Fights for Them!" The Divine Warrior in the Exodus Narrative*, GDBS 58 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2014), 173–79.

[57] Bunnens, *Tell Ahmar II*, 62–63, 129–30, 167.

[58] *ANEP*, 218, no. 670 (Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara).

[59] For more on curses in the ancient Near East, see F. Charles Fensham, "Common Trends in Curses of the Near Eastern Treaties and *Kudurru*-Inscriptions Compared with Maledictions of Amos and Isaiah," *ZAW* 75 (1963): 155–75; Delbert R Hillers, *Treaty-Curses and the Old Testament Prophets*, BibOr 16 (Rome: Pontifical

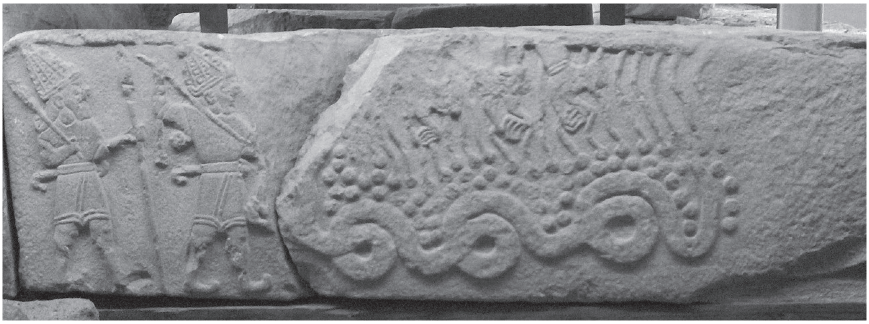

Fig. 8.9. Hittite god fighting a dragon. Museum of Anatolian Civilizations, Ankara, Turkey. Photo courtesy of Georges Jansoone, Wikimedia Commons.

8.2.1. Egyptian

A text proclaiming the superiority of the scribal position in Pap. Sallier I mocks soldiers for needing to call for help to the gods to survive a battle: "Whilst the foe is hidden in the reed-thicket and the enemy stands in readiness, the soldiers goes and calls upon his god: 'Come to me that thou mayest rescue me!'"[60] In the midst of the famous Battle of Qadesh against the Hittite king, the poem version of the account records Ramesses II calling on Amun to help him. After the prayer, Amun came to him to encourage him, and the pharaoh's heart was steadied for battle.

> What is this with you, my Father Amun? What sort of father ignores his son? My plans collapse without you. Have I not gone and listened for your voice that I might not disobey the counsel which you gave?—How great he is, the mighty Lord of Egypt, letting foreigners encroach upon his land!—What is on your mind? These Asiatics are hiding scoundrels ignorant of god!

Biblical Institute, 1964); Timothy G Crawford, *Blessing and Curse in Syro-Palestinian Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, AUSTR 120 (New York: Lang, 1992); Kevin J. Cathcart, "The Curses in Old Aramaic Inscriptions," in *Targumic and Cognate Studies: Essays in Honour of Martin McNamara*, ed. Kevin J. Cathcart, JSOTSup 230 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1996), 140–52; Anne Marie Kitz, *Cursed Are You! The Phenomenology of Cursing in Cuneiform and Hebrew Texts* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2014).

[60] Caminos, *Late-Egyptian Miscellanies*, 318; also Simpson, *Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 438–39 ("Reminder of the Scribe's Superior Status").

> Have I not constructed for you many towering monuments? Did I not fill your temples with my spoils of war? [The prayer here continues with a long list of other things he had done for Amun.]
>
> Might One consider then a small good deed in favor of the one who trusts himself to your good counsel? Do good to him who counts on you; then he obeys you with a heart of love!
>
> I have cried out to you, my father Amun, amidst a multitude of enemies I do not know. The foreign lands assembled to fight against me, I am alone, there is no other with me. My host of infantry has gone, nor did a single charioteer look back at me as I cried out to them; Not one heard me as I called to them.
>
> But then I found Amun mighty for me above a million soldiers, a hundred thousand charioteers, More than ten thousand men, comrades and children, united in singleness of heart. No, not the work of multitudes of people—Amun is mightier than they! I learned these things from your own mouth, O Amun; and I did not exceed your counsel.[61]

Various rituals were also done to defeat the enemy and protect a temple, including throwing balls and shooting arrows. In the former version, the names of protective deities were written on the balls, and the king would run to throw a ball against each of the four cardinal points (each representing an area ruled by Egypt: Nubia, Asia, Libya, and Upper and Lower Egypt). In the latter version, arrows were shot at each of the targets.[62] One ritual that was performed throughout Egyptian history was the use of execration texts, in which the name of an enemy ruler or an Egyptian rebel was placed on a piece of pottery and then smashed, signifying that the enemy would also be killed (fig. 8.10).[63]

After Thutmose IV heard that a Nubian foe had rebelled against him, he went to the temple and offered sacrifices to his father Amun. He asked for guidance from Amun, who "guided him on a path of success."[64] Later

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[61] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 168–69.

[62] Lana Troy, "Religion and Cult during the Time of Thutmose III," in Cline, *Thutmose III*, 151–52; Richard A. Parker, Jean Leclant, and Jean-Claude Goyon, *The Edifice of Taharqa by the Sacred Lake of Karnak*, BEStud 8 (Providence: Brown University Press, 1979), 61–65; Decker, *Sport and Games of Ancient Egypt*, 115; for a picture of the ritual, see Parker, Leclant, and Goyon, *Edifice of Taharqa*, pl. 25.

[63] For examples, see *ANET*, 328–29; *COS* 1.32:50–52; for a picture of an execration figurine, see *ANEP*, 196, no. 593 (Brussels).

[64] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 3*, 251 (Konosso Stela); also *ARE* 2.327–29.

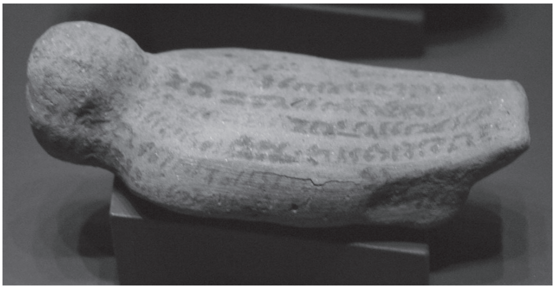

Fig. 8.10. Egyptian execration figure. E.7491 in Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels. Picture courtesy of Nauna, Wikimedia Commons.

in Egyptian history, Piye instructed his generals to cleanse themselves before battle.

> When you arrive within Thebes before Karnak, you should enter into the water. Purify yourselves in the river! Clothe yourselves in the best linen! Lay down the bow, withdraw the arrow! Do not boast of greatness as a possessor of strength! The might has no strength in ignorance of him (Amon), for he makes the broken-armed strong-armed. (Thus) do multitudes turn tail to the few; one seizes a thousand men. Sprinkle yourselves with the water of his altars. You should kiss the ground before him and you should say to him: "Give us passage, that we might fight in the shadow of your strong arm! The corps of recruits whom you have sent, let its onslaught occur while multitudes tremble before it."[65]

In many places, curses were included in inscriptions for disturbing a stela that called on the gods to attack the perpetrator. The Donation Stela of King Tefnakht included the vicious "donkey curse" and called for the fiery breath of Sakhmet to fall on anyone who disturbed the fields he had given to Neith (both Neith and Sakhmet were Egyptian goddesses).

> As for the one who will disturb them, the wrath of Neith comes to be against him forever and ever. His son will not be confirmed in his office. May the donkey rape him; may the donkey (rape) his wife and his children. May he go to the fiery blast of the mouth of Sakhmet and to the oath of the Lord of the universe and (that of) the gods altogether. The one who will subtract from this donation for Neith, may his moments

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[65] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 479.

> (of life) be diminished, may he be buried in the flame. His children will not succeed to him. Beware of Neith; do not approach the Angry One![66]

8.2.2. Hittite

In the Ten Year Annals of Mursili II, he raised his hand to the Sun Goddess of Arinna, asking for help when he had recently arisen to the throne. She answered by standing by him. "O sun-goddess of Arinna, my lady! The neighboring enemy lands who have called me a child, they have belittled me. And they have begun to try to take your borderlands. O sun-goddess of Arinna, my lady, stand with me, and destroy before me those surrounding enemy lands."[67] A prayer from Arnuwanda I highlighted the piety of the Hittites before informing the Sun Goddess that the Kaska had invaded the country and disrupted the ritual activity that provided for the gods.[68] Likewise, a prayer to the Sun Goddess of Arinna by Tudhaliya IV confessed his sin in neglecting the festival before asking the goddess to give him victory over an unnamed enemy.[69] In the humorous text the Siege of Urshu, a frustrated leader calls down a curse on his incompetent subordinates: "May the Storm-god wash you away!"[70]

The Hittites performed many rituals before battles.[71] As already noted in §§3.3.1.2 and 3.3.2.2, new troops often took oaths. Various other rituals included an incantation to provide magical help for the officers, a ritual entitled "When the soldiers go away from the land to campaign and [they go] to the enemy land to fight," and a purification ritual for the war horses.[72] A ritual as part of the *hisuwas* festival sought to bring military victory to the king.

> One of the musicians who stands in the gate of the god will blow the horn and one of the *purapši*-priests who stands on the roof, will speak

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[66] Ibid., 440–41.

[67] *ANEHST*, 254 (*CTH* 61.I.A); also *COS* 2.16:84.

[68] Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 40–43 (*CTH* 375).

[69] Ibid., 108–9 (*CTH* 385.9).

[70] Beckman, "Siege of Uršu Text," 25.

[71] For more on military rituals among the Hittites, see Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals"; Lorenz and Schrakamp, "Hittite Military and Warfare," 131–35; Prechel, "Wenn die Soldaten aus dem Lande ziehen …"; Alice Mouton, *Rituels, Mythes et Prières Hittites*, LAPO 21 (Paris: Cerf, 2016).

[72] Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 66–67.

> in front of the king to encourage him the following words: "O king, be not afraid! The Storm-god will put for you, o king the enemies and the lands of the enemy under your feet and you will smash them like empty jars. To you, o king life, health, future heroism and prosperity of the gods will constantly be given. Do not be afraid of anybody for you will have them defeated."[73]

One interesting ritual involved making a clay figure of the Hittite general and a wood figure of the enemy general and throwing both figures into a fire; the destruction of the enemy general showed the forthcoming victory of the Hittites.[74] A ritual involving the severing of a puppy and the passing of horses between the severed parts most likely was designed to purify the horses for battle.[75] A ritual drama was performed depicting the battle of the Hittites and the enemy to show what would happen:

> They divide the (group of) young men into halves, and they name them. One half they call "men of Ḫatti," and the other half they call "men of Maša." The "men of Ḫatti" have bronze weapons, but the "men of Maša" have reed weapons. And they fight. And the "men of Ḫatti" win, and a prisoner they take, and to the god they devote him. And the god they pick up, and into the temple they carry him home. On the postament they put (him) down.[76]

The Siege of Urshu describes a parody of rituals that were done during a siege, but due to the nature of the parody and translation difficulties the details of these rituals are unclear. As described here, the rituals work backward.

> The sons of Lariya and Liraya (himself), while inactive, sang the song (of? the War-god) Zababa: "We have *clogged*? the threshing-floor with

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[73] Meindert Dijkstra, "Prophets, Men of God, Wise Women: Dreams and Prophecies in Hittite Stories," in *Prophecy and Prophets in Stories: Papers Read at the Fifth Meeting of the Edinburgh Prophecy Network, Utrecht, October 2013*, ed. Bob Becking and Hans M. Barstad, OTS 65 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 14 (*CTH* 628).

[74] Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 66–67.

[75] Collins, "The Puppy in Hittite Ritual," 220–21 (*KBo* 10.44 obv. 13'–18'; *CTH* 644).

[76] Charles Carter, "Hittite Cult-Inventories" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1962), 143 (*KUB* 17.35 iii 9–16; *CTH* 525.2); cited in Kang, *Divine War*, 72; for another translation, see Prechel, "Wenn die Soldaten aus dem Lande ziehen …," 386.

> *laḫni*! The puppies are wearing helmets$^?$! They brought a fine ox of the threshing-floor, (but) they carried off (something that was) *not a shield*$^{??}$; they brought a spindle, (but) they carried off (mere) reeds; they brought a hair-clasp, (but) they carried off a *wooden*$^?$ club! Last year Tutḫaliya engaged in hesitation—now you have engaged in hesitation!"[77]

Sacrifices were performed to show to the gods that the enemy had begun the hostilities and to call on the council of the gods to decide who should be the just victor. Sometimes the sacrifices were done at the border of the enemy land to appeal to the gods that their sanctuaries had been taken away: "Blot out the Kashkean country, O gods! Let every single god take thought for his place of worship and win it back!" The latter part of the ritual summoned the Kaska gods and accused them and the Kaskean people of beginning the conflict by taking Hittite land. "The gods of the Hatti land and the (Hittite) people call for bloody vengeance. The [vengeance] of the Hatti gods and the vengeance of the (Hittite) people [will be wrought] on you, the gods [of the Kashkean country] and the [Kashkean people]." The ritual ends with a call to eat and drink and go fight the enemy.[78]

Mursili II recorded an example of calling on the deities to judge a lawsuit in his annals when he entered into a conflict with the king of Arzawa, Uhhaziti, over the matter of refugees in his third year. Several vassal troops of Mursili II fled to Arzawa, and Uhhaziti refused to return them to the Hittites. The two kings met in battle at Tikkukkuwa, and Mursili II claimed victory. However, he did not receive his refugees, and later that year he marched to Arzawa and sent Uhhaziti a message, calling on him to return the refugees and accusing him of insulting him, concluding with the statement "Let the Stormgod, my lord, decide our lawsuit."[79] The following part of the story includes the striking of Arzawa with the lightning bolt, recorded in §8.6.2.

Finally, many rituals were undertaken to prevent the plague from infecting the battle camp. Most of these were complex multiday affairs, but the simplest one is summarized in this way by Beal: "A short ritual against plague in a fortress simply tells one to tie up a sheep at the edge of the fortress, and tell the deity who made the plague that the sheep is for him and that he should go to the enemy land and not into the fortress."[80] One plague ritual sought to protect Hatti and send the plague (symbolized as an arrow of the plague god Jarri) to a foreign country: "O god, keep shooting the enemy land with these arrows. But when you come into the land of Ḫatti, let your quiver be closed. Let your bow be unstrung." The same text also spoke of pointing a donkey's eyes to a neighboring country to cause the plague to go there and speaking to Jarri "Yo, Yarri, you made evil in this land and army. Lift up this donkey and carry it to the land of the enemy."[81]

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[77] 77. Beckman, "Siege of Uršu Text," 26 (*CTH* 7).

[78] 78. *ANET*, 354–55; portions of the text also in Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 67–68.

[79] 79. *COS* 2.16:85 (*CTH* 61.I.A); see also *ANEHST*, 255.

The Hittite treaties commonly contained curse sections calling the gods to action when the treaty was broken. This curse in a treaty between Muwattalli II of Hatti and Alaksandu of Wilusa is a stereotypical example.

> If you, Alaksandu, transgress these words of the tablet which stand on this tablet, then these Thousand Gods shall eradicate you, together with your person, your wife, your sons, your lands, your cities, your vineyard, your threshing floor, your field, your cattle, your sheep, and together with your possessions. They shall eradicate your progeny from the Dark Earth.[82]

Throughout the treaty between Mursili II of Hatti and Kupanta-Kurunta of Mira-Kuwaliya the Hittite king warned his vassal that if he disregards the treaty "the oath gods shall pursue you unrelentingly."[83] When Mursili II learned that a vassal had rebelled (Aitaqqama of Qadesh), he said "the oath-gods shall take [revenge]. Son shall kill father, brother shall kill brother, and they shall destroy their own [flesh and blood]!"[84] The Hittite king Mursili II attributes an outbreak of the plague to the transgression of an oath by his father Suppiluliuma in regard to the Egyptians. The Hittites and the Egyptians had agreed not to attack each other, but when the Hittites attacked Egypt “the men of Hatti thereby suddenly transgressed the oath of the gods.” The Storm God still “by his verdict caused my father to prevail,” but Egyptian prisoners of war brought the plague to Hatti, causing extensive suffering there. The connection between the plague and the oath-breaking was confirmed by an oracle.[85]

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[80] Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 72 (*KUB* 41.17 ii 1–17; *CTH* 424); for a survey of other Hittite rituals against the plague in the military, see ibid., 68–73; see also *COS* 1.62:161 (*CTH* 407) and *COS* 1.63:162 (*CTH* 410).

[81] Beal, "Hittite Military Rituals," 72 (*KUB* 7.54 ii 7–iv′; *CTH* 425); see also H. M. Kümmel, *Ersatzrituale für den hethitischen König*, StBoT 3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1967), 101; Billie Jean Collins, "Hittite Religion and the West," in *Pax Hethitica: Studies on the Hittites and Their Neighbours in Honour of Itamar Singer*, ed. Yoram Cohen, Amir Gilan, and Jared L. Miller, StBoT 51 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010), 56; for more on the plague god Jarri, see Volkert Haas, *Geschichte der Hethitischen Religion*, HdO 15 (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 368–69.

[82] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 92 (*CTH* 76); see also *TLC* 1:563.

[83] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 78 (*CTH* 68); see also *TLC* 1:515.

[84] Beckman, "The Hittites Make Peace," 121 (*KBo* 5.4 ii 10–13; *CTH* 67).

8.2.3. Early Mesopotamian

In the third millennium, Utu-hegal prayed to his goddess Inanna “My lady, lioness of battle, who butts the foreign lands, the god Enlil has com[missioned me] to bring back the kingship of the land of Sumer. [May you be my] a[lly].”[86] Later, on the brink of battle with the Gutians, he prayed similar prayers to Ishkur and Utu, requesting that they be his allies.[87] A prayer to Adad (for prosperity and taking away the sin of the one praying) grounds the request in his mastery of the weather and his martial ability, which he used to defeat Anzu.[88]

Yarim-Lim of Aleppo called on Shamash to decide between him and his enemy Yashub-yahad in a letter. “Šamaš ought to investigate your conduct and mine and come to judgment.”[89] Kibri-Dagan, a governor of Terqa, wrote to the king of Mari and included an imprecatory prayer: “Concerning the rumors about the enemy that we constantly hear—may God snap this enemy’s weapons.”[90] A letter was sometimes sent to a deity before battle (such as ARM 1.3 = LAPO 18.931 = Sasson 5.2.a.1 = *COS* 4.46:227).

The Mari texts record a few rituals.[91] Before a battle to capture a city, a group of allies came together to make a treaty by killing stallions (ARM 26.24). Shamshi-Adad noted that he performed sacrifices after the army was mustered (ARM 1.10 = LAPO 17.475 = Sasson 5.3.d.iv). ARM 26.205

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[85] Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 58–59 (*CTH* 378.II).

[86] RIME 2:285, E2.13.6.4, 27–32.

[87] RIME 2:286, E2.13.6.4, 83–97.

[88] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 636–37.

[89] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 184 (A.1314 = LAPO 16.251 = Sasson 3.2.b).

[90] Ibid., 186 (ARM 3.15 = LAPO 17.726 = Sasson 3.2.c.iv); for another example, see ibid., 202 (ARM 26.168 = Sasson 3.4.a.ii).

[91] For more on rituals at Mari, see Sasson, *Military Establishment at Mari*, 36–37; Durand, *Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari*, 284–85; Guichard, “Aspects Religieux de la Guerre a Mari,” 38–41.

refers to a ritual of "opening weapons" before battle. Bahdi-Lim advised Zimri-Lim to go before the troops and pray for them when he went on campaign with them (ARM 26.119 = Sasson 1.4.c.ii.1). Yahdun-Lim, a king of Mari, called down strong martial curses on anyone who replaced his foundation deposits with their own versions. "May the god Šamaš smash his weapon and the weapon of his army. May the gods Ašnan and Šakkan impoverish his land. May hostilities close the gate of his land and may battle keep raging in his land."[92]

8.2.4. Assyrian

Many Assyrian kings prayed before battle, such as Sargon II, who said "to Assur, my lord, I lifted my hand," after which he went on to conquer the enemy.[93] Before the battle with a Babylonian army at Halule, Sennacherib recorded that "I myself prayed to the deities Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Bēl, Nergal, Ištar of Nineveh, (and) Ištar of Arbela, the gods who support me, for victory over (my) strong enemy and they immediately heeded my prayer (and) came to my aid."[94] When Assurbanipal heard that the Elamite king Teumman had decided to go to war against him, he approached Ishtar to ask for her help; Ishtar promised to support Assurbanipal in his battles and prohibited him from taking part in the battle.

> Because of this impudence uttered by Teumman, I approached Ištar, the most high. I placed myself before her, prostrated myself under her feet. My tears were flowing as I prayed to her divinity:
>
> "O Lady of Arbela! I am Assurbanipal, king of Assyria, creation of your hands, whom Aššur, the father who made you, desired and whom he called by name to renovate shrines, to carry out the rituals of the gods, to protect their secret lore and to delight their hearts. I am the one who visits regularly your dwellings, I come to worship you and take care of your rituals.
>
> Now this Teumman, king of Elam, who does not respect the gods, has assembled all (his forces) to combat my troops. You are the lady of the ladies, the goddess of warfare, the lady of battle, and the counselor of the gods, your fathers! You spoke good words for me before Aššur, the

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[92] RIME 4:604, 4.6.8.1, 64–73.

[93] *ARAB* 2:6, §12; also Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 319.

[94] RINAP 3.1:182, 22, v.62b–67a.

> father who made you, so that he, raising his pure eyes, wished me to be the king.
>
> As to Teumman, king of Elam, he has become a burden for Aššur, the king of the gods, the father who created you! He has assembled his troops and armed himself in preparation for war in order to march into Assyria. You are the most warlike among the gods! Scatter him like a load in the tumult of battle; raise against him a destructive wind and storm!"[95]

Like the other nations, the Assyrians practiced a variety of rituals before battle.[96] As noted earlier in §3.2.4, they practiced divination to learn about the events happening in foreign countries. A variety of sources indicate that Assurbanipal was very interested in collecting scribal texts, including ritual texts. A later scribal copy of a letter listed the various kinds of texts Assurbanipal wanted, including "'Mustering' (the army?), series to do with war, as many as there are, including their additional tablets, as many as there are, (the ritual) So that in Battle Arrows do not Come Near a Man."[97] These rituals (especially those after battle) might have helped to restore discipline among the troops.[98] Examples of rituals appear at times in the Assyrian reliefs, such as the Balawat Gates by Shalmaneser III (fig. 8.11). However, most commonly these rituals are done in the Assyrian camp, symbolizing the extension of Assyrian control in distant lands.[99]

One specific example from Assurbanipal's library begins with a call to the gods not to listen to the "barbarians" (*ummān-mandu*) because he had glorified the gods (the assumption surprisingly was that both sides were worshiping the same gods). The incantation (to be done at night) following the prayer consisted of making a figurine and a dagger, writing a name on it (the name of the enemy, most likely), killing a pig and pouring out its

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[95] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 146–49 (Prism B); see also *ARAB* 2:330–33, §§858–63; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 65–71.

[96] Anna Maria G. Capomacchia and Marta Rivaroli, "Peace and War: A Ritual Question," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 171–88; Daniel Schwemer, "Witchcraft and War: The Ritual Fragment Ki 1904-10-9, 18 (BM 98989)," *Iraq* 69 (2008): 21–28; Sarah C. Melville, "The Role of Ritual in Warfare during the Neo-Assyrian Period," *RC* 10 (2016): 219–29.

[97] Grant Frame and A. R. George, "The Royal Libraries of Nineveh: New Evidence for King Ashurbanipal's Tablet Collecting," *Iraq* 67 (2005): 281 (CT 22.1).

[98] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 100.

[99] Capomacchia and Rivaroli, "Peace and War," 176; a relief with rituals being done in the camp is BM 124914, part of Sennacherib's series on Lachish; Barnett, Bleibtreu, and Turner, *Sculptures from the Southwest Palace*, pls. 346–47, nos. 438–39.

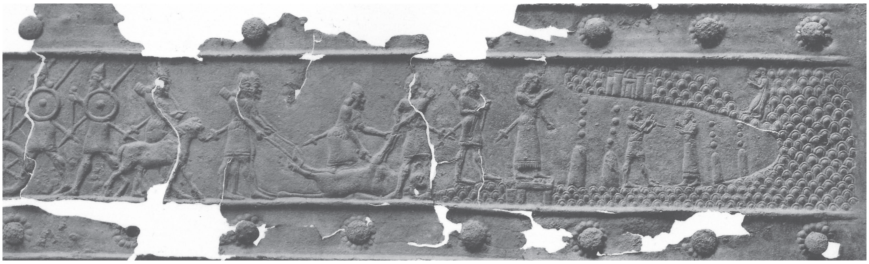

Fig. 8.11. Assyrian ritual on campaign. Band 10 of the Balawat Gates. Photo from L. W. King, *Bronze Reliefs from the Gates of Shalmaneser*, pl. 59.

blood, and putting the figurine and the dagger into the pig. Finally, the pig was placed at the border of the enemy's land.[100]

Another ritual, after mentioning body hair in a broken context, called for the king to sleep with a lady and send her to the border. "sein Körperhaar nebst … […] schaffst du fort an die Grenze des Feindeslandes und […]. Am neunten Tag führst du ein Mädchen vor den König hinein, [und] er beschläft sie und schafft sie fort an die Grenze des Feindeslandes. Wenn er mit dem Mädchen Geschlechtsverkehr (gehabt) hat, badet er drei Tage lang in Wacholder-Wasser." The rest of the ritual involves various prayers and sacrifices to the gods.[101] A letter from Adad-shumu-usur to the king contains a similar ritual (SAA 10.210 = LAS 137). "On the 13th of [Duʾuzu], tomorrow, [the far]mer goes to the *qersu*, [ent]ers the reed hut, sits down, (then) [ret]urns [from] the *qersu* (and) goes […]. A barber enters. The nails [which] he cuts are put into a bottle (which) is sealed (and) brought [to] the border of the enemy country. Or they go (and) act in this way on the 15th day."[102]

A ritual to be done in the temple of Assur was designed to protect the king against an enemy, placing an anthropomorphic figure (*sarrānu*) before the divine images and pointing it toward the "enemy" (presumably it was represented by something in the room) in the midst of singing and dancing, including a song that declared “My game is the battle.” Then an arrow is prepared and at the end of the ritual is shot into the heart of the “enemy.”

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[100] Schwemer, "Witchcraft and War," 34–38.

[101] W. Mayer, "Ein neues Königsritual gegen feindliche Bedrohung," *Or* 57 (1988): 147–49 (Th.1905-4-9, 89.2'–8' [BM 98583]); SAA 10.209 = *LAS* 139 might relate to this ritual.

[102] For more on the use of hair and fingernails in rituals preventing harm, see Stefan M. Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung: Eine Untersuchung altorientalischen Denkens anhand der babylonisch-assyrischen Löserituale (Namburbi)*, BaF 18 (Mainz: von Zabern, 1994), 76–77.

> Vor die Götter(bilder) treten sie hin; ḫitpu-Schlachtopfer bringen sie dar. Vor die Götter(bilder) stellen sie ‘Puppen’ hin. Der naru-Sänger intoniert (das Lied)…. Sie richten die Gesichter der ‘Puppen’ gegen den ‘Feind’. Sie summen (? und) tanzen. Die kurgarrû-Mimen singen (das Lied) “Mein Spiel ist der Kampf”. Die assinnu-Mimen respondieren mit Wehklagen. Sie reissen sich (gegenseitig die Kleider vom Leib?). Der König spannt (wörtl.: füllt) den Bogen unter freiem Himmel (und) legt ihn dann auf den Erdboden. Sie heben ihn vom Erdboden auf (und) spannen ihn (erneut). Sie nehmen einen Pfeil vom Streitwagen des Nerigal weg und umwickeln seine ‘Zunge’ (d.i. die doppelte Schneide der Pfeilspitze) mit [Wolle]. Der Bogenschütze der Götter legt ihn dem König in die Hand. Der König hebt die Spindel an seiner Hüfte empor, befestig (?) daran den Pfeil und lässt ihn dreimal herumwirbeln. Er küsst (den Pfeil) und gibt ihn dem Bogenschützen. Dieser legt ihn in die Hand des Wagenlenkers der Nerigal und er lässt (den Pfeil) auf dem Bogen (genauer: der Sehne des Bogens) ‘reiten’. Der Wagenlenker des Adad, der Palastvorsteher (und sein) Stellvertreter besteigen (ihre) Streitwagen mit (der Standarte) ^{d}Bēlat-dunāni. Sie lassen ihre Pfeile ‘reiten’, schiessen (sie jedoch noch) nicht ab. Man räumt die Opfertische mit den ḫitpu-Schlachtopfern ab. (Der König?) packt die Streitwagen (und) wendet sich um/fährt (damit) herum. Der Wagenlenker des Nerigal spricht: “Auf Befehl des Aššur: Los!”. Dann schiessen sie den Pfeil dem ‘Feind’ ins Herz und fahren dreimal (mit dem Stretiwagen) herum.[103]

A ritual to be performed when an enemy might attack involved making a mace (*ḫutpalû*), writing a name on it (“Unterwerfer des Landes des Unbotmässigen”), and declaring the weapon to be that of a god (“er ist die Waffe Enlils”).[104] Another ritual employed figures of the enemy and the king.[105] A ritual designed to protect horses from evil might have been done before battle.[106] A *namburbi*-ritual could be done on a chariot to protect a prince or a king on campaign when a chariot breaks. The completion of the ritual would enable him to bind the enemy ("er seinen Feind binden können wird"). It begins with this situation:

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[103] Brigitte Menzel, *Assyrische Tempel*, 2 vols., StPohlSM 10 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981), 1:T.84 (K.3438a +9912 and K.9923); a similar ritual is found in ibid., T.89 (K.10209).

[104] M. Elat, “Meopotamien Kriegsrituale,” *BO* 39 (1982): 15–16.

[105] Ibid., 21–23.

[106] Stefan M. Maul, “Ein altorientalischer Pferdesegen-Seuchenprophylaxe in

> Wenn ein Fürst einen Streitwagen besteigt und dann, wenn er sich auf einen Feldzug begeben hat, entweder das Joch oder die Deichsel oder die Lanze oder aber irgendein Zapfen$^{?}$ des (C: jenes) Streitwagens zu Bruch geht und der Mensch (B: der Fürst), der Besitzer des Streitwagens, (das) sieht, jenen Fürsten, der den Streitwagen bestieg, wird Unwohlsein stetig verfolgen, die (durch das Vorzeichen angezeigten drohenden) Folgen wird er sehen.[107]

Sennacherib wrote that before he crossed the water to attack a group of Chaldeans, he "had pure sacrifices performed for the god Ea, *king* of the *apsû*. [I cast (them)] into the sea with a gold boat, a gold fish, (and) a gold crab, and (then I immediately had my boats cross over to the land of the city Nagītu."[108] One letter refers to a ritual done during a siege, but it is unclear what it consisted of (SAA 18.164). Finally, a ritual in which the king identifies himself with Marduk might have been performed before battle (SAA 3.37). "The king, who wears his jewelry and roasts young virgin goats, is Marduk, who wearing his armour bur[ned] the sons of Illil and Ea in fire. The king, who opens the vat in the race, is Marduk, who [defeat]ed Tiamat with his penis."

Many examples of curses can be found in Assyrian monuments and treaties. Esarhaddon included an unusual curse on anyone who tampered with his stela in this example: "may the goddess Ishtar, lady of war and battle, change him from a man into a woman, and may she seat him, bound, at the feet of his enemy."[109] The treaty Assur-nerari V made with the king of Arpad includes a curse section, telling what would happen if the vassal king broke the treaty.

> [If the Assyrian army] goes to war at the orders of Aššur-nerari, king of Assyria, and Matiʾ-ilu, together with his magnates, his forces and his char[iotry] does not go forth (on the campaign) in full loyalty,

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der assyrischen Armee," *ZA* 103 (2013): 16–37.

[107] Maul, *Zukunftsbewältigung*, 397.

[108] RINAP 3.2:83, 46, 79–81.

[109] RINAP 4:186, 99, rev.55–56.

> May Sin, the great lord who dwells in Harran, clothe Matiʾ-ilu, [his so]ns, his magnates, and the people of his land in leprosy as in a cloak; may they have to roam the open country, and may there be no mercy for them. May there be no more dung of oxen, asses, sheep, and horses in his land.
>
> May Adad, the canal inspector of heaven and earth, put an end to Matiʾ-ilu, his land, and the people of his land through hunger, want, and famine, may they eat the flesh of their sons and daughters, and may it taste as good to them as the flesh of spring lambs. May they be deprived of Adad's thunder so that rain becomes forbidden to them. May dust be their food, pitch their ointment, donkey's urine their drink, papyrus their clothing, and may their sleeping place be in the dung heap.
>
> If Matiʾ-ilu, his sons, or his magnates who (*sic*!) sin against this treaty of Aššur-nerari, king of Assyria, may his farmers not sing the harvest song in the fields, may no vegetation spring forth in the open country and see the sunlight, may women fetching water not draw water from the springs, [may …] be their food, […] their drink.[110]

In Assurbanipal's Rassam Cylinder, the curse that the rebels had sworn came down upon them and defeated them, according to Assurbanipal's description of events. "The oath of Aššur, king of the gods, overtook them."[111] Later in the inscription, the Assyrian king described in more detail the curses that Uaite swore to in his treaty with Assurbanipal that came back against him when he rejected the Assyrian king.

> Uʾateʾ, along with his troops, who did not keep my loyalty oath, who before the weapon of Aššur, my lord, had run away, and fled before them, Girra the warrior felled them. Want occurred among them, and in their hunger they ate the flesh of their sons. By all the curses which are written in their loyalty oath, in accordance to what had been decreed for them by Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Adad, Bēl, Nabû, Ištar of Nineveh, Šarrat-Kidmuri, Ištar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal, and Nusku, young camels, young asses, calves and spring lambs on seven nursing animals will suck, but they will not satisfy their stomachs with milk. The people of the land of Arabia, one to one will ask each other, saying: "For what reason did these evil events come upon the land of Arabia?" saying: "because we did not keep

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[110] SAA 2.2, iv.1–26; see also *TLC* 1:943–45; *COS* 4.34:151.

[111] *COS* 4.41:185; also *ARAB* 2:294, §773; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 213.

> the great loyalty oaths of (the god) Aššur, we sinned against the good/covenant of Aššurbanipal, the king, beloved of the heart of Enlil."[112]

In Cylinder B, Assurbanipal recorded a list of kings who were killed by curses, including dying at the bite of a wild boar and through dropsy.[113] Likewise, a subordinate wrote to Assurbanipal to report on a military victory over the Qedarites and ascribing those who escaped the sword to death by hunger as a result of breaking the covenant with Assyria (SAA 18.143). "Accordingly, since he defeated them, they have become scared. And as the treaty of the king, my lord, has caught up with them, those who escaped the iron sword will die of hunger."

8.2.5. Later Empires

Although presumably the Babylonians and Persians often called for divine help, few records of it have remained. In a short text inscribed on an ax, Nebuchadnezzar I called on Marduk to help him in battle. "O God Marduk, you are able to rescue the prayerful man (and) to make the one who is assiduous toward your sanctuaries stand (in victory) over (his) enemies. Your breeze wafted to me; I am able to throw down my enemies. Strengthen my weapons so that I may overthrow my foes!"[114] A ritual that appears to date to Babylon during the Kassite period called for Shamash to intervene in a battle. The ritual lasted at least seventeen days, but the broken state of the tablet prohibits detailed knowledge of the ritual. The final days of the ritual not included here involve more recitations and casting food items into bonfires.

> In Simanu, 3rd day: the *kurgarrû* goes to E-tur-kalamma and stands at the east gate. He recites as follows: "O Šamaš, who ensures renewal for the great gods, who illuminates the corners of the world, shepherd of human folk, asleep in the meadow, who confronts the aggressor, who conquers the evil and destroys the aggressor! Come straight to me from the distant heavens: here am I, standing before (!) you. You, Šamaš, are the king of the lofty heavens. I am one who averts (evil) portents, who tells of your

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[112] *COS* 4.41:194; also *ARAB* 2:318–19, §828; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 248.

[113] *ARAB* 2:329–30, §857; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 59–61; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 223.

[114] RIMB 2:17, 2.4.4; also Foster, *Before the Muses*, 387.

> valour. An aggressor attacked us, plundered our flocks. A wicked enemy came quickly against us, the evil one laid waste our countryside. The foe captured us. His bow was nocked to let the arrows fly. But we ourselves, we did not know how to grasp a quiver. Elam overwhelemed our sacred localities. We did not know the great craft of war, and the Subarian [*was as*] *hostile to* him as a ewe-lamb. Babylon, its loins have been stripped. O mighty [*hero*], king of the gods, Šamaš, judge of heaven and the underworld, [… *lord of*] ghosts, King Šamaš, *who pronounces favour*, [*defeat the evil*] *one*, *desecrate* [*his land* …." This is the ritual for the morning.]
>
> [In Simanu, nth day: … "…] the great gods …" This is the ritual for the afternoon.
>
> [In Simanu], 9th day: the *kurgarrû* goes to E-me-urur, the temple of Nanāy [in] TE.E$^{\text{ki}}$ (!), and stands with his face turned towards the east. He does not enter the cult-room. He hurls a *ḫašḫuru*-fruit and a pomegranate at the outside of the cult-room. This is the ritual for the morning.
>
> The 9th day: the female members of the temple staff of E-tur-kalamma assemble and make merry in the lobby of E-tur-kalamma. They hurl *ḫašḫuru*-fruit at all the cult-rooms. They say "Come on now! come on now!" ⸢This is the ritual for the afternoon.⸣[115]

Several rituals found in Nineveh but written in Babylonian may typify the kind of rituals the Babylonians did (though these particular rituals were written before the rise of the Neo-Babylonian Empire). The first ritual below was designed to protect the king, while the second was for the entire army on campaign.

> Enuru-incantation: "Reed thicket …, reed thicket …, reed thicket …, *the distraught one … by a victorious spell*." It is the wording (of an incantation) so that enemy (and) foe do not come near the king. Its ritual: You take seven *šalalu*-reed stems; you put seven pellets of gazelle dung inside each (of them). You seal (their) opening(s) with clay. You recite the incantation seven times into (them). You bury (them) around the king's city, palace, bed and throne, then the city of the king and his army will be safe.
>
> Enuru-incantation: "May Ninurta march before me, (may) Meslamtaea (march) behind me; the Seven-gods are clearing the way for me. May the (enemy) on the river not step ashore, may the (enemy) on dry land not run along. The warrior *is* [*girded with d*] *eath*, may the *ne*[*therworld*

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[115] A. R. George, "Four Temple Rituals from Babylon," in *Wisdom, Gods and Literature: Studies in Assyriology in Honour of W. G. Lambert*, ed. A. R. George and I. L. Finkel (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 274–78 (BM 32656 iii.3‘–iv.12‘).

> *s*]*eize* the roaming (foe) by the decree of [*my*] victory [*which bestowed*] *on me* the king of the universe and Lord-of-the-gods as well as Tiruru, *the* [*queen of cam*]*paigns*." It is the wording (of an incantation) for [*go*]*ing* [*through the steppe*] *against* the enemy, (and) it is for [*overcoming*] lion (and) rob[ber]. Its ritual: [You make] four figurines o[f clay]. You recite the incantation seven times. You thr[ow] (them) into the four cardinal directions. You set up [*a ritual arrangement*], then you go on campaign.[116]

In one inscription Darius calls on Ahura Mazda to protect him from his enemies. "May Auramazda bring me aid, together with all the gods; and may Auramazda protect this country from the army (of the enemy), from famine, from the lie!"[117] Herodotus recounted how Darius called on Zeus to help him against the Athenians when he heard about their burning of Sardis (*Hist.* 5.105). Xenophon recorded that Cyrus consulted the gods before expeditions (*Cyr.* 1.5.6) and looked for omens, such as an eagle that caught a rabbit (*Cyr.* 2.4.19).

8.2.6. West Semitic

When a large group of kings attacked Zakkur, he said that, "I lifted my hands to Baalshamayn." His god responded to him through prophets and saved him in the upcoming battle.[118] Similarly, an inscription on the stela of a storm god (from Tell Ahmar and dated to around 900) records a similar action: "But I [raised] up (my) han[d(s)] to this celestial Tarhunzas, to him those (?) *words* (?) [I spoke(?): "…].[119] Idrimi recorded that he employed both sheep and bird omens before he traveled with his soldiers.[120] In one of the few prayers found at Ugarit, this text provides instructions for calling out to Baal during a siege after listing the prescribed offerings for the month after the winter solstice,

> When a strong foe attacks your gate, a warrior your walls, You shall lift your eyes to *Baʿlu* and say: O *Baʿlu*, if you drive the strong one from

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[116] Daniel Schwemer, "Protecting the King from Enemies, at Home and on Campaign: Babylonian Rituals on Th 1905-4-9, 67 = BM 98561," *ZA* 102 (2012): 213–14.

[117] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 2:487 (DPd §3).

[118] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 205–6; see also *ANEHST*, 308–11; *COS* 2.35:155.

[119] Hawkins, *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, 1:241; 3:pls. 99–100 (Tell Ahmar 1).

[120] *COS* 1.148:479.

> our gate, the warrior from our walls, A bull, O *Baˁlu*, we shall sanctify, a vow, O *Baˁlu*, we shall fulfill, a firstborn, O *Baˁlu*, we shall sanctify, a *ḥtp*-offering, O *Baˁlu*, we shall fulfill, a feast, O *Baˁlu*, we shall offer; To the sanctuary, O *Baˁlu*, we shall ascend, that path, O *Baˁlu* we shall take. And *Baˁ*[*lu* will h]ear [your] prayer: He will drive the strong foe from your gate, [the warrior] from yo[ur] walls.[121]

The Old Testament is filled with prayer to YHWH to help them in battle. One of the more famous examples is the prayer of Hezekiah when Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem.

> O Lord the God of Israel, who are enthroned above the cherubim, you are God, you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made heaven and earth. Incline your ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to mock the living God. Truly, O Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, and have hurled their gods into the fire, though they were no gods but the work of human hands—wood and stone—and so they were destroyed. So now, O Lord our God, save us, I pray you, from his hand, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you, O Lord, are God alone. (2 Kgs 19:15–19 NRSV)

Various rituals are attested throughout the area in relation to warfare. According to the Old Testament, when he was besieged in Kir-hareseth, Mesha sacrificed his firstborn son on the wall (2 Kgs 3:27). In the Aqhat epic, Pugatu "reddened" her body and armed herself before going to kill Yatpan, showing that she was dressing as a warrior.[122] El also commanded Kirta to redden his body before a battle: "Wash yourself, and rouge yourself too" (*trtḥṣ wtadm*).[123] This reddening before battle might be a ritual that was practiced throughout the ancient Near East, but the only other evidence is from the Old Testament.[124] Along with the command to rouge himself, El also commanded Kirta to perform several other rituals before the battle.

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[121] Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, 53, 149–50 (RS 24.266 = *KTU* 1.119); also *COS* 1.88:283–85.

[122] Simon B. Parker, "Aqhat," in *Ugaritic Narrative Poetry*, 77.

[123] Greenstein, "Kirta," 14.

[124] Frank Ritchel Ames, "The Red-Stained Warrior in Ancient Israel," in Kelle, *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol*, 83–110. A Hittite text (a soldier's oath) that includes a blood colored red pelt in a curse might refer to this practice; see *COS* 1.66:167 (*CTH* 427); Ames, "Red-Stained Warrior," 91–92.

> Take a lamb [in your hands]: A lamb of sa[crifice in] your right, A kid in them both—All your available (?) [food]. Take a pig[eon], bird of sacrifice. Pour wine into a silver basin; Into a gold basin, honey. Ascend to the top of the lookout; Mount the city-wall's shoulder. Raise your hands toward the sky. Sacrifice to Bull El, your Father. Adore Baal with your sacrifice, Dagon's Son with your offering.[125]

The Egyptians often portrayed their enemies calling on their gods to help them in battle, especially in their reliefs depicting sieges of enemy cities. One of the clearest examples is the relief at Karnak depicting the siege of Ashkelon by Merenptah.[126] During the last moments of the siege, the inhabitants of Ashkelon stood on the ramparts with their hands raised to heaven.[127] Some scholars have suggested that the Ashkelonites (and other defenders of cities raising their hands) were supplicating the victors for mercy.[128] The reliefs in which the victors have already entered the besieged city or in which the raised hands of the defenders are directed toward the victors lend themselves to this interpretation.[129]

However, the defenders in many of these sieges are most likely supplicating their own gods in desperation, especially the reliefs that portray the defenders still fighting and directing their raised hands toward

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[125] Greenstein, "Kirta," 14, *KTU* 1.14.ii.13–26; see also 1.14.iii.55–iv.8.

[126] Scholars formerly assigned the relief to Ramesses II, as argued in *ANEP*, 288; Donald B. Redford, "The Ashkelon Relief at Karnak and the Israel Stela," *IEJ* 36 (1986): 188–200; however, many now ascribe it to Merenptah, including Frank J. Yurco, "Merenptah's Canaanite Campaign," *JARCE* 23 (1986): 189–215; Lawrence E. Stager, "Merenptah, Israel and Sea Peoples: New Light on an Old Relief," *ErIsr* 18 (1985): 57*–58*; Peter J. Brand, "The Date of the War Scenes on the South Wall of the Great Hypostyle Hall and the West Wall of the Cour de La Cachette at Karnak and the History of the Late Nineteenth Dynasty," in Collier, *Ramesside Studies*, 51–84.

[127] *ANEP*, 112, no. 334; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 294.

[128] *ANEP*, 288–290, 293; Hugo Gressmann, *Altorientalische Bilder zum Alten Testament* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1927), 35, 45.

[129] *ANEP* 116, nos. 344–45; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pls. 87–88; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:145, 151; Othmar Keel, "Kanaanäische Sühneriten auf ägyptischen Tempelreliefs.," *VT* 25 (1975): nos. 5, 15; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 313–14. Keel argues that the religious iconography depicts the defenders of the city supplicating the Egyptian god-man pharaoh, rather than their local deities. He supports this with other reliefs that show people supplicating the pharaoh with raised hands, holding a smoking brazier in front of him, and offering children to him; see Keel, "Kanaanäische Sühneriten."

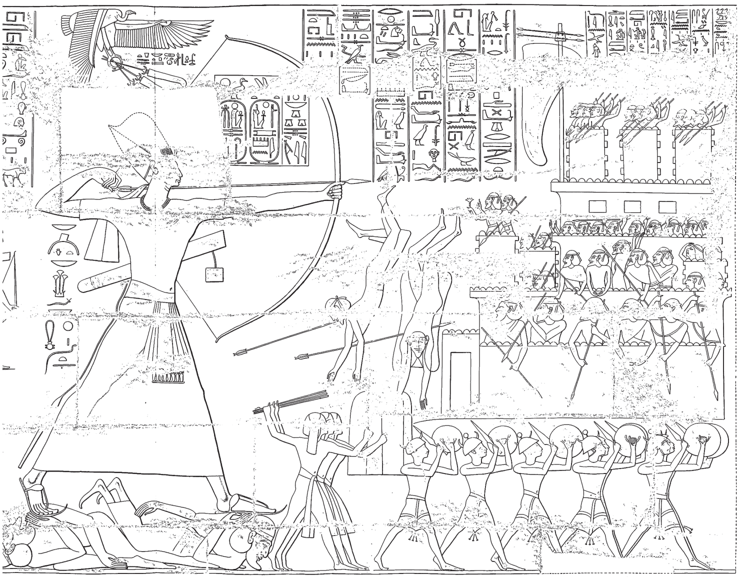

Fig. 8.12. Ramesses III besieging a city. Harold H. Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pl. 94. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

the heavens, away from the attackers (fig. 8.12).[130] Other ritual activity by the defenders supports this interpretation, including the men holding braziers and the possible child sacrifice depicted on the towers of some of these cities.[131] Burke highlights how the reliefs depict the besieged town in four different stages: before the siege begins, in the middle of the siege, just before the defeat, and after the siege. The motif of defenders raising their hands frequently occurs in the first three stages, but never in the fourth, where one would expect submission to the pharaoh.[132] The Egyptians included reliefs of their enemies worshiping their gods to demonstrate that the overwhelming power of Egypt prevails even over enemies who call on their gods for help. This is illustrated by an inscription next to one relief depicting a siege: "Said by the vile chief in exalting the Lord of the Two Lands: '(I) did not believe that there was no other like Baʿal, (but) the Ruler is his true son forever.'"[133] Although some of these reliefs might depict the defenders supplicating the attackers rather than their own gods, others clearly depict the defenders calling out to their own god.

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[130] Aaron A. Burke, "More Light on Old Reliefs: New Kingdom Egyptian Siege Tactics and Asiatic Resistance," in Schloen, *Exploring the Longue Durée*, 58, 61; for the reliefs, see *ANEP* 112, no. 334; 117, no. 346; Nelson, *Medinet Habu 2*, pl. 94; Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:58, 146; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 294, 316.

[131] Ph. Derchain, "Les plus anciens témoignages de sacrifices d'enfants chez les Sémites occidentaux," *VT* 20 (1970): 351–55; Anthony J. Spalinger, "A Canaanite Ritual Found in Egyptian Military Reliefs," *JSSEA* 8 (1978): 47–60. However, V. A. Donohue argues that this child sacrifice ritual was done with the pharaoh as the intended object; see V. A. Donohue, "A Gesture of Submission," in *Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society in Honour of J. Gwyn Griffiths*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd, EESOP 8 (London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1992), 82–114; another possible interpretation of the children being lowered from the walls is that they were helping them to flee from the Egyptian army; see Burke, "More Light on Old Reliefs," 60.

The book of Kings does not refer to Israelite rituals before battle, but other parts of the Old Testament describe the role of the ark of the covenant (Num 10:35; 14:44; Josh 6; 1 Sam 4–6), other holy items (Num 31:6), and trumpets before battle (Num 10:9; 31:6; Josh 6; Judg 7:16–22).[134]

The best witness to curses in the area is in the Old Testament, where the most prominent curses are those included in the Mosaic Covenant (Lev 26; Deut 28). Several of these curses involved martial aspects, such as the following: "The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you shall go out against them one way and flee before them seven ways. You shall become an object of horror to all the kingdoms of the earth" (Deut 28:25 NRSV). In Kings, Elisha cursed in the name of YHWH a group of boys who were mocking him, and two bears came and attacked them (2 Kgs 2:23–24).

8.3. Messages from the Divine Warriors

After their people's calls for help, the divine warriors communicated with them in a variety of ways. The most prominent of these was divination, especially extispicy, the inspection of the entrails of various sacrificial animals to determine the will of the gods. Diviners were trained to "read" the entrails (especially the liver) through textbooks and clay liver models

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[132] 132. Burke, "More Light on Old Reliefs," 61.

[133] 133. Spalinger, "Canaanite Ritual Found in Egyptian Military Reliefs," 51; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, 13.

[134] 134. For a study of martial rituals done at the city gate on the way to battle and their function in creating community, see Rüdiger Schmitt, "Establishing Communitas: Royal Rites of Military Loyalty and Their Socio-religious Function," in Olyan, *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible*, 137–46.

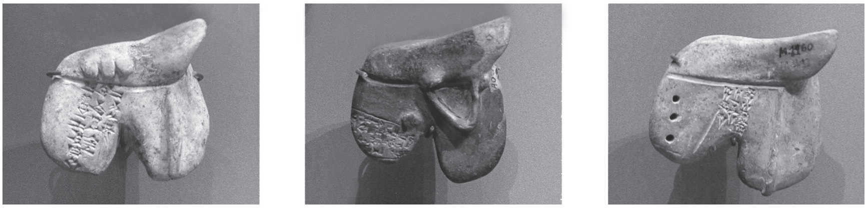

Fig. 8.13. Liver models from Mari. Louvre AO 19837. Photo courtesy of Jastrow, Wikimedia Commons.

(fig. 8.13). In most cases, extispicy provided a positive or negative answer that could be verified with a second animal.[135] In a few special occasions, the divine warriors spoke messages directly to the king that were more detailed than those delivered through divination (these messages were often delivered through prophets).[136]

8.3.1. Egyptian

Several Egyptian pharaohs recorded that they received messages from their gods before battle, though the means of these messages is usually unclear. Amun-Re appeared in a dream to Amenhotep II to encourage him before a campaign.[137] After his prayer to Amun (recorded in §8.2.1), Ramesses II heard Amun encourage him. "And he called as if behind me, 'Go forward! I am with you! I am your Father, my hand is in yours! I am stronger than hundreds of thousands of men! I am the Lord of Battle, Love of Victory!'"[138] Montu promised to be with Ramesses III in battle. "Your father Amun has sent you out, that he may overthrow for you the rebels. I grant to you my standard as Commander, to vanquish your foe. May you go in victory and return with valour, against every land that has attacked you."[139] Sheshonq

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[135] For more on extispicy in the ancient Near East, see SAA 4; Beal, "Hittite Oracles"; Ann Jeffers, *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria*, CHANE 8 (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Ivan Starr, *The Rituals of the Diviner*, BMes 12 (Malibu, CA: Undena, 1983).

[136] For a useful collection of these prophetic texts, see Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*.

[137] *COS* 2.3:21–22.

[138] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 169.

[139] "First Libyan War: Medinet Habu Scenes, First Series," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.2:11.

I recorded several speeches from Amun in his reliefs at Karnak, such as the following. "I gave victory to the [feats] of your arms, all lands, all foreign countries united [under] [your] sandals, dread of you extending to the four supports of [heaven], the war cry of Your Majesty pervading the Nine Bows."[140]

8.3.2. Hittite

The Hittite kings often asked guidance from the gods about military strategy and even choosing military leaders. It appears that the king would offer a wide range of options to the gods primarily for the gods to reject several options, leaving the king to decide which of the remaining options he would choose.[141] For example, in one text the king offered several different options for a place of campaigning. "Do you, O god, approve a campaign this year for His Majesty on the Durmitta front? (Answer: Yes.) We repeat the question: (Answer: Again yes.) Do you, O god, approve a campaign this year for His Majesty on the Nerik front?"[142] The king could also ask if he would win. "Will you gods give me the King of Assyria? Will I defeat him. Will it be unfavorable for the king of Assyria (Answer: Yes.)"[143] Another set of Hittite oracle reports date to the reign of Tudhaliya I or II.[144]

> Should Muwattalli attack the herds and flocks of the city of Iyaganuena? Result: unfavorable.
> Should we send immediately to fortify the city of Kammamma? And is that favorable? Result: deferred.
> Concerning whether any foreign troops will mistreat the civilian captives: liver and edge favorable. It will persist because of (this) sign.[145]

One particular kind of oracle was augury, in which the flight of birds was examined to see whether the gods approved of a course of action.[146] Sarla-

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[140] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 202; also *COS* 4.3:15.

[141] Beal, "Gleanings from Hittite Oracle Questions," 32–35; for an extended example of these oracles, see Beal, "Seeking Divine Approval."

[142] Beal, "Gleanings from Hittite Oracle Questions," 32 (*KBo* 22.264 I; *CTH* 577).

[143] Ibid., 34 (*KUB* 18.55 ii 17–18 + *KUB* 5.17 ii 9–10; *CTH* 580.1).

[144] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline, *Ahhiyawa Texts*, 7.

[145] Ibid., 221, 227 (AhT 22 §§2, 3, 28 = *CTH* 571.2).

[146] Daliah Bawanypeck, "Die Auguren und das hethitische Heer," in Neumann, *Krieg und Frieden*, 97–108.

LAMMA informed the king about a series of military maneuvers that were frustrated by the lack of a clear answer from their attempted divinations involving birds.

> Regarding the fact that we were making oracular observations (of birds) in the towns Šipišaši, Pišatenitišša, and the land of Malazziya: no bird$^{?}$ was actually defeating us, but the birds were *refusing to give us an answer*.
>
> Since you, Your Majesty, my lord, were in Kašaša, we situated ourselves in Panāta. But when you, Your Majesty, my lord, marched$^{?}$, since the bird *refused to give us an answer*, we drove back to Kašaša, and the birds began *refusing to give* us *an answer* (in?) Kašaša as well.
>
> Then we came back to Tapikka and from (the base of) Tapikka have now carried out the auguries! So let Your Majesty, my lord, be informed!
>
> We thoroughly investigated by augury the matter of (Your Majesty's planned attack on) the town Takkašta, and we obtained an answer. Regarding the campaign we said (i.e., predicted?) as follows: "His Majesty will (successfully) attack Takkašta and reap its crops as well."[147]

However, these oracles also took time. In one treaty Mursili II prohibited Kupanta-Kurunta of Mira-Kuwaliya from taking a bird oracle before sending troops to help the Hittite king if the vassal had heard that a Hittite messenger was coming to ask for help: urgency was needed.[148] The letter by Sarla-LAMMA to the king quoted above illustrates the difficulties of taking a bird oracle and why it might cause delays. The Hittite annals refer often to these oracles (though they appear more often when the general leads the troops than when the kings personally lead them). In year nine of the Ten Year Annals of Mursili II, a general informed the king that he was awaiting the response of the oracle about going to battle.[149] A Middle Hittite king (perhaps Arnuwanda I or Tudhaliya) commanded Pulli to have his men reap the crops to protect them from the Kaska, while he (the king) performed oracular inquiries to determine further strategy.[150]

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[147] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 180 (*HKM* 47; *CTH* 581).

[148] Beckman, *Hittite Diplomatic Texts*, 78 (*CTH* 68).

[149] *COS* 2.16:89 (*CTH* 61.I.A).

[150] Hoffner, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 132–33 (*HKM* 21; *CTH* 186); for a similar example, see ibid., 140–41 (*HKM* 25; *CTH* 186).

8.3.3. Early Mesopotamian

Extispicy texts from the Old Babylonian period demonstrate that the diviner played an active military role.[151] Part of the career path for a diviner was to be attached to an army unit and go campaigning with them. They could refer to "my armies" and were sometimes called "the one who walks in front of the army."[152] The omen results would offer guidance in military strategy and suggest who would win the upcoming battles. "[If] ⸢the apex of the heart⸣ is (both) bright and dark to the left: ⸢terror⸣ will ⸢befall⸣ the enemy's army."[153] A Mari letter from Yasim-El recounted a situation in which the diviners provided direct military advice.

> Further: among the 3 hundred garrison troops whom my lord assigned to stay in Karana—they made extispicies for the well-being of Qaṭṭara, and the extispicies were very bad. They (the diviners) had a word with me, (saying), 'We wonder whether they will not seize that city while you (pl.) are staying (in Karana), and (whether) no wrong will happen. Dispatch 1 hundred troops, and they must guard that city.' Menirum and I consulted, and 1 hundred ⸢Suhean⸣ troops and ⸢Yaqqim-Lim⸣ their guide—I made extispicies for the well-being of those troops and dispatched them in light of sound extispicies.[154]

A diviner at Emar was proven correct when the enemy was defeated and was granted a field as a reward. "As the Hurrian troops surrounded the city wall of Emar, the divination of Mašruḫe, diviner of the king and the city, came true. Pilsu-Dagan, the king, therefore, has given him this field as a present."[155] A Babylonian oracle asked Shamash about the success of a military venture of Hammurabi (although the question relates to the reign of Hammurabi in the eighteenth century BCE, the preserved text dates from the first millennium).

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[151] For an overview of this theme, see Krzysztof Ulanowski, "A Comparison of the Role of *Bārû* and *Mantis* in Ancient Warfare," in Ulanowski, *Religious Aspects of War*, 65–98.

[152] Jeyes, *Old Babylonian Extispicy*, 15, 21–23.

[153] Ibid., 160 (BM 96948, l. 9).

[154] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 353 (ARM 2.39 = ARM 26.411 = LAPO 17.594).

[155] Akio Tsukimoto, "Akkadian Tablets in the Hirayama Collection (I)," *ASJ* 12 (1990): 191; see also *ANEHST*, 90, 176–77.

> Šamaš, lord of the judgment, Adad, lord of the inspection, concerning the soldiers of the palace, the soldiers of the palace gate, the chariot soldiers, the foot soldiers, the elite soldiers, the desert soldiers, the grouped soldiers, the Sutian and country soldiers, soldiers that Marduk rules over, as many as Ḫammurabi, king of Babylon, calls together, organises and disbands:—should he select and choose chariots and infantry, should Adanshu-likshud, son of Sîn-naḫrāri, who supervises the infantry, take control and lead them from the base camp? Should he take the eastern route along the bank of the Tigris, and go to Kasalluḫḫu? Will they then, by the might of his victory, by … speaking, by every kind of skilled operation and all available kinds of battle equipment, take that city Kasalluḫḫu? Will they then safely return with a share of the abundant profit and spoil of that city? And will they send back news of success to the owner of this woolen fringe, that the seer may see, and the hearer may hear? Your divinity, Šamaš and Adad, etc. A *tamītu* concerning Hammurabi's going on a campaign to seize Kasalluḫḫu.[156]

Many of the letters recovered from Mari deal with divination.[157] Diviners were employed by the king and often traveled with the armies on their campaigns. Ibal-pi-El noted in a letter that a diviner was at the front of the troops (ARM 2.22 = LAPO 17.585 = Sasson 3.4.b.ii). The following is an example from the diviner Erib-Sin who reports to Zimri-Lim about the extispicies he made for the troops, giving details about the entrails ("lookout", "path", etc. were names of parts of the liver). "After the second day of the month of Hibirtum (V), I made extispicies for the well-being of the troops (for a period) of a month of 30 days and 30 nights, and in my first set the lookout was in place. The path was in place. The palace gate was sound. The cleft was in place."[158] These extispicies could be checked and even preserved for later reference. For example, the extispicies could be sent to someone (ARM 26.109); in one case the diviner Erib-Sin said that, "I baked those extispicies and sealed them in a box and sent (it) to my lord."[159] Extispicies were taken very seriously; Bahdi-Lim, the governor of

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[156] Lambert, *Babylonian Oracle Questions*, 25; also Foster, *Before the Muses*, 138–39.

[157] For many texts about diviners, see Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 271–89; Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 94–95, 577; for a brief survey, see Guichard, "Aspects Religieux de la Guerre a Mari," 34–36.

[158] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 213 (ARM 26.96).

[159] Ibid., 214 (ARM 26.98); see also ARM 26.169.

Mari, instructed Zimri-Lim that he was to do battle only when the extispicies were positive (ARM 26.176 = ARM 6.64 = LAPO 17.620).

The Babylonian king Samsu-iluna, the son of Hammurabi, recorded that his gods encouraged him before battle. "Samsu-iluna, the capable king, the one who listens to the great gods, was greatly encouraged by the words which the god Zababa and the goddess Eštar spoke to him. He made ready his weapons in order to kill his enemies and set out on an expedition to slaughter his foes."[160] The Mari archives provide extensive references to the words of the gods (many of which concerned military affairs) coming to the king through prophets. Adad instructed Zimri-Lim through a prophet that he should always seek an oracle before battle. "If you go [off] to the war, never do so [wi]thout consulting an oracle. [W]hen I become manifest in [my] oracle, go to the war. If it does [not] happen, do [not] go out of the city gate."[161] In a few cases, kings received divine messages from the gods of other nations, demonstrating that god's influence over the other nation.[162]

However, it appears that the prophets did not provide specific military instructions; the closest instruction for military action is the word to Zimri-Lim from prophets hired by his wife Shibtu that an upcoming confrontation with Ishme-Dagan would not result in a battle: "There will be no armed conflict! For as soon as his (Zimri-Lim's) auxiliaries arrive they will be scattered."[163] Most prophecies restricted themselves to broad promises of support in upcoming battle; for example, Dagan promised victory to Zimri-Lim, in spite of the king's lack of attention to the god. "Zimri-Lim: Even though you are neglectful about me, I will massacre on your behalf. Your enemy I will deliver up into your hand. The people that steal from me I will catch, and I will gather them into the camp of Belet-ekallim."[164]

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[160] RIME 4:387, 4.3.7.7, 80–91.

[161] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 22 (A.1968 = FM 7 38 = Sasson 5.7.b.iii); also *COS* 4.47:228.

[162] As noted in §8.4.3, the message in A.1968 = FM 7 38 = Sasson 5.7.b.iii is an example. For a study of this phenomenon, see Jonathan Stökl, "Divination as Warfare: The Use of Divination across Borders," in *Divination, Politics, and Ancient Near Eastern Empires*, ed. Alan Lenzi and Jonathan Stökl, ANEM 7 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2014), 49–64.

[163] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 40 (ARM 26.207 = Sasson 5.7.c.ii.1).

[164] Ibid., 48 (ARM 26.214).

The Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sin emphasized the importance of oracles. Even though the gods prohibited him from fighting, he went anyway. "Thus I said to my heart (i.e., to myself), these were my words: 'What lion (ever) performed extispicy? What wolf (ever) consulted a dream-interpreter? I will go like a brigand according to my own inclination. And I will cast aside that (oracle) of the god(s); I will be in control of myself.'"[165] Unfortunately for the king, his army was entirely destroyed in the battle.

8.3.4. Assyrian

The gods communicated with the Assyrian kings in a variety of ways, including letters to Assyrian kings (SAA 3.41–47). However, communication from the gods became much more common in the time of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal. In this divination query, Esarhaddon asked whether he should send an army to Sirish (SAA 4.28).

> Šamaš, great lord, give me a firm positive answer to what I am asking you!
>
> From this day, the 10th day of this month, Sivan (III) of this year, to the 29th day, the day of the moon's disappearance of this month Sivan of this year, for 20 days and nights, the passing and the coming days included, the term stipulated for the performance of (this) extispicy—
>
> within this stipulated term, (should) Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, who is now intent on sending men, horses and troops, as he wishes, to Siriš,(and) whom your great divinity knows—
>
> in accordance with the command of your great divinity, Šamaš, great lord, (and) your favorable decisions, should the subject of this query, Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, strive and plan?
>
> Should he send men, horses and troops, as he wishes, to Siriš? Is it pleasing to your great divinity?
>
> If the subject of this query, Esar[haddon], king of Assyria, having planned, sends (them), will the people of Siriš, or the Manneans, or the Ridaeans, or any (other) enemy, from this day to the day of my [stipu] lated term, band themselves together into an army (against)the army he is sending to [Siriš]?
>
> Will they […] by their own [delibe]ration, strive and plan, and [attack the army of Esarh]addon, in order to kill, plun[der, loot? Will they kill]what there is to k[ill, plunder what there is to plunder], loot

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[165] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 317.

> [what there is to lo]ot in their midst [...]? Will it be delivered to them as booty?

Prophecy also became prevalent again in Mesopotamia during the reigns of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal.[166] One document lists various individuals who would be in attendance at a large event in Nineveh; among the mostly military men appears Quqi the prophet (SAA 7.9). Like the Mari prophecies, these Neo-Assyrian prophets usually encouraged the king and did not provide specific martial instructions. Here is an example of a prophecy from Ishtar of Arbela to Esarhaddon.

> [Esarh]addon, king of the lands, fear [not]! What is the wind that has attacked you, whose wings I have not broken? Like ripe apples your enemies will continually roll before your feet.
>
> I am the great Lady, I am Ištar of Arbela who throw your enemies before your feet. Have I spoken to you any words that you could not rely upon?
>
> I am Ištar of Arbela, I will flay your enemies and deliver them up to you. I am Ištar of Arbela, I go before you and behind you.
>
> Fear not! You have got cramps, but I, in the midst of wailing, will get up and sit down.[167]

On another occasion Assur promised to support Esarhaddon through direct action. "I will deliver the Cimmerians into his hands; the land of Ellipi I will set on fire."[168] At other times he promised the use of nature weapons against the enemies. "As you were standing in their midst, I removed them from your presence, drove them up the mountain and rained fire and brimstone upon them. I slaughtered your enemies and filled the River with their blood. Let them see it and praise me, for I am Aššur, lord of the gods!"[169] When Assurbanipal heard that the Elamite king Teumman had decided to go to war against him, he approached Ishtar to ask for her help. Ishtar promised to support Assurbanipal in his battles and prohibited him from taking part in the battle. However, the king immediately decided to begin battle precisely because of Ishtar's encouragement.

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[166] For the texts, see SAA 9 and Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 97–132; beyond the prophetic texts themselves, for other Neo-Assyrian texts referring to prophecy, see Martti Nissinen, *References to Prophecy in Neo-Assyrian Sources*, SAAS 7 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 1998).

[167] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 102–3 (SAA 9.1).

[168] Ibid., 119 (SAA 9.3).

[169] Ibid., 120 (SAA 9.3).

> Ištar heard my desperate sighs and said to me: "Fear not!" She made my heart confident, saying: "Because of the prayer you said with your hand lifted up, your eyes being filled with tears, I have compassion for you."
>
> The very same night as I implored her, a visionary lay down and had a dream. When he woke up, he reported to me the nocturnal vision shown to him by Ištar: "Ištar who dwells in Arbela entered, having quivers hanging from her right and left and holding a bow in her hand. She had drawn a sharp-pointed sword, ready for battle. You stood before her and she spoke to you like a mother who gave birth to you. Ištar, the highest of the gods, called to you and gave you the following order: 'You are prepared for war, and I am ready to carry out my plans.' You said to her: 'Wherever you go, I will go with you!' But the Lady of Ladies answered you: 'You stay here in your place! Eat food, drink beer, make merry and praise my godhead, until I go to accomplish that task, making you attain your heart's desire. You shall not make a wry face, your feet shall not tremble, you shall not even wipe the sweat in the tumult of war!'" She sheltered you in her sweet embrace; she protected your entire body. Fire flashed in her face, and she went raging away, directing her anger against Teumman, king of Elam, who had made her furious."[170]

Divine messages could also be sent to other people. Assurbanipal recorded that Ishtar appeared in a dream to his soldiers to encourage them to cross a dangerous river (quoted in §3.4.2.4).[171] In Edition B of his annals, the Assyrian king claims that Assur appeared in a dream to Gyges, the king of Lydia, and showed the Lydian king Assurbanipal's royal name. After the dream, Gyges went out to defeat the Cimmerians.[172]

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[170] Ibid., 146–49 (Prism B); also *ARAB* 2:332–33, §§860–61; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 65–71; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 225.

[171] *COS* 4.41:190; *ARAB* 2:308, §807; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 240.

[172] *ARAB* 2:326, §849, ed. B, ii.93–iii.4; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 47–49; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 218.

8.3.5. Later Empires

As in other areas, evidence about divination among the Babylonians and Persian is limited, though they certainly practiced it. For example, a divination text from the time of Nabonidus includes the following line: "If the base of the middle 'finger' of the lung is loose: my army will take booty."[173] The classical authors attribute divination to the magi among the Persians.[174] Herodotus records that diviners played a role in convincing Xerxes to attack the Greeks (*Hist.* 7.6).

8.3.6. West Semitic

Several texts related to divination and extispicy have been found at Ugarit, though they are fragmentary. A lung model (perhaps of a goat?) includes reference to martial activity. "If the city is about to be seized, if someone (lit., 'a man') attacks, the (male) personnel (of the city)."[175] A manual interpreting malformed animal fetuses also includes references to war. "[And] if it has no […], the king will seize the lan[d of his enemy and?] the weapon of the king will lay the land low."[176] Although divination was technically forbidden in the Old Testament (Deut 18:10; 1 Sam 15:23), the Urim and Thummim functioned as basic divinatory tools (Num 27:21; 1 Sam 14:41; 28:6).[177] Elisha's commands to Joash recorded in 2 Kgs 13:14–19 about the arrows reflect a kind of divination.

> Now when Elisha had fallen sick with the illness of which he was to die, King Joash of Israel went down to him, and wept before him, crying, "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" Elisha said to him, "Take a bow and arrows"; so he took a bow and arrows. Then he said to the king of Israel, "Draw the bow"; and he drew it. Elisha laid his hands on the king's hands. Then he said, "Open the window eastward";

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[173] Starr, *Rituals of the Diviner*, 128 (VAB IV 266, 17).

[174] Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander*, 96.

[175] Pardee, *Ritual and Cult at Ugarit*, 131 (RS 24.277).

[176] Ibid., 139 (RS24.247+).

[177] For recent studies of divination in the Old Testament, see Frederick H. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and Its Near Eastern Environment: A Socio-Historical Investigation*, JSOTSup 142 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); Jeffers, *Magic and Divination*; Solomon Nigosian, *Magic and Divination in the Old Testament* (Brighton: Sussex, 2008).

> and he opened it. Elisha said, "Shoot"; and he shot. Then he said, "The Lord's arrow of victory, the arrow of victory over Aram! For you shall fight the Arameans in Aphek until you have made an end of them." He continued, "Take the arrows"; and he took them. He said to the king of Israel, "Strike the ground with them"; he struck three times, and stopped. Then the man of God was angry with him, and said, "You should have struck five or six times; then you would have struck down Aram until you had made an end of it, but now you will strike down Aram only three times." (2 Kgs 13:14–19 NRSV)

A few West Semitic texts refer to the gods delivering messages concerning martial affairs to kings. The Amman Citadel Inscription is difficult to read, but appears to be an oracle from the god Milcom to an Ammonite king: "for all who besiege you shall surely die."[178] The Aramean king Zakkur records that Baal-shamayn addressed him through prophets during a siege: "F[e]ar not, for I have made [you] king, [and I who will st]and with [you], and I will deliver you from all [these kings who] have forced a siege against you!"[179]

In the Old Testament, when Ahab requested that Jehoshaphat join him in an attack on Ramoth-gilead, the Judean king required that the Israelite king inquire what YHWH would say about it. The prophets led by Zedekiah said that YHWH approved, but Micaiah informed them that YHWH would not approve of the attack (1 Kgs 22:5–29). A prophet of YHWH appeared to the Israelite king when Ben-Hadad besieged Ahab in Samara and promised that YHWH would give him the victory (1 Kgs 20:13–15). The following year a man of God came again to Ahab in the face of an Aramean attack and informed him that he would win again because Ben-Hadad had disrespected YHWH (1 Kgs 20:28). Elisha passed intelligence to the king of Israel from YHWH concerning the secret gathering places of the Aramean troops (2 Kgs 8–10). When Hezekiah prayed to YHWH for help when Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem, Isaiah prophesied YHWH's support for him (2 Kgs 19:20–34), culminating with the following:

> Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. By the way that he came, by the same

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[178] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 203; also *COS* 2.24:139.

[179] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 206; also *COS* 2.35:155; *ANEHST*, 308–11.

> he shall return; he shall not come into this city, says the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David (2 Kgs 19:32–34 NRSV).

8.4. Divine Abandonment

Although the gods sometimes addressed their people to encourage them, in other cases they did not listen to their people and abandoned them, leading to their defeat. Divine abandonment thus was a way of explaining a defeat, though it eventually became a threat in the hands of the empires, who told the smaller nations around them that their god had abandoned them and their only recourse was to surrender.

8.4.1. Egyptian

The Egyptians do not seem to have thought as often in terms of divine abandonment as those from Mesopotamia. As quoted in §5.3.1, they sometimes portrayed Asiatics describing their trust in their gods who had proved to be less powerful than the pharaoh. The Admonitions of Ipuwer and the Prophecies of Neferti hint of divine abandonment when they describe previous times of chaos.[180]

8.4.2. Hittite

Anitta wrote that the goddess Halmssuit of Hattusa had given the city to him when it was struck with famine.[181] The prayer of the Hittite king Tudhaliya IV includes a confession of his wrongdoing in regard to keeping the festivals of the Sun Goddess of Arinna, who then did not help him in battle. He asked that she forgive him and grant him military victories.

> I have sinned [against the Sun-goddess of Arinna], my lady, and I have [o]ffended the Sun-goddess of Arinna, my lady, and I have offended the Sun-goddess of Arinna, [my lady]. [And when] I began to get oracular

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[180] *AEL* 1:149–63 (“The Admonitions of Ipuwer”); 1:139–45 (“The Prophecies of Neferti”).

[181] *COS* 1.72:183 (*CTH* 1.A); for more on this event (and some difficult grammatical decisions), see Itamar Singer, “‘Our God’ and ‘Their God’ in the Anitta Text,” in *Atti del II congresso internazionale di hittitolgia*, ed. Onofrio Carruba, Mauro Giorgieri, and Mora Clelia, StMed 9 (Pavia: Iuculano, 1995), 343–50.

> guidance, (it turned out that) I neglected your festivals. [If you], O Sun-goddess of Arinna, my lady, became angry with [me] on account of some festivals, take care [of me] again, O Sun-goddess of Arinna, my lady! May I defeat the enemy! [If you, O Sun-goddess] of Arinna, my lady, will step down [to me], and I shall defeat the enemy, I shall [confess] my sin [before you] and never again [shall I omit] the festivals. I will not again interchange the spring and [autumn festivals].[182]

8.4.3. Early Mesopotamian

The idea of divine abandonment was common in early Mesopotamia. Shulgi boasted that he caused the god of the enemy city to leave. "I will make the god of its city turn away? from it, Its protective UDUG-spirit, 'the good eye', and its protective LAMA-spirit, 'the good eye', I will cause them to stand aside."[183] One of the main themes of the Lamentation of the Destruction of Sumer and Ur is that the gods had deserted the city.[184] According to the end of the Weidner Chronicle, Marduk abandoned various leaders who do not honor him, beginning with Sargon the Great.

> Because of the [sacrilege] he had committed, Enlil changed the word he had said and, from the East to the West, there was a revolt against him, and he was afflicted with restlessness.
>
> Narām-Sîn destroyed the living creatures of Babylon and twice (Marduk) raised the army of Guit against him; (the latter) goaded on his people. He entrusted his kingship to the army of the Gutians.
>
> The Gutians, (being people given to arouse) cries of woe, did not know how to honor the gods nor how to perform divine rites and ceremonies correctly. Utu-ḫegal, the fisherman, caught a fish at the seashore (in order to make) an offering. This fish, to be offered to the great lord Marduk, was not presented as an offering to any other god. But the Gutians pulled the cooked fish out of his hands before it was offered. By his exalted command, (Marduk) removed the Gutian army from the kingship of his country and entrusted it to Utu-ḫegal. (Later), Utu-ḫegal, the fisherman, raised the hand of evil against his city, and the river carr[ied away] his corpse.[185]

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[182] Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 108 (*CTH* 385.9).

[183] Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 80–81 (Šulgi D, 22–221).

[184] Samet, *Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur*.

[185] Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, 266–69; also *ANEHST*, 166–68; Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles*, 149–50.

In a prophecy Adad described his generosity in giving land to Yahdun-Lim, but when the king abandoned Adad's cause, he took away that land. "Abiya, prophet of Adad, the lord of Alep[po], came to me and said: 'Thus says Adad: "I have given the whole country to Yaḫdun-Lim. Thanks to my weapons, he did not meet his equal. He, however, abandoned my cause, so I g[av]e to Šamši-Adad the land I had give to him." ' "[186]

8.4.4. Assyrian

Divine abandonment does not appear often in Assyrian sources, most likely because it does not fit the Assyrian ideology of constant victory.[187] The death of Sargon II in battle attracted explanations based in divine abandonment; a text purportedly written by Sennacherib tells of the results of divination that blame Sargon's death on his disregard for the gods of Babylon (SAA 3.33). "Was it because [he esteemed] the gods o[f Assyria too much], [placing them] above the gods of Babylonia […, (and was it) because] he did no[t keep] the treaty of the king of gods, [that Sargon my father] was slain [in the enemy country and] was not b[uried] in his house?"[188]

However, the Assyrians were not reticent to speak of the gods of other nations leaving them. It is possible that Sennacherib was the first to use this threat against his enemies, but it appears this motif was used by victors long before him.[189] In an astrological report (most likely from the time of Esarhaddon) an unnamed author reports on the possibility of Enlil giving his weapons to the enemy (SAA 8.502). "If Nergal stands in Scorpius: a strong enemy will carry off the land; Enlil will give his weapon to the enemy; few enemy troops will defeat my numerous troops." Sargon attributed his conquest of Babylon to Marduk.

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[186] 186. Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 21–22 (A.1968 = FM 7.38 = Sasson 5.7.b.iii); also *COS* 4.47:228. For more on this text, see §8.5.3.

[187] 187. Zaia, "State-Sponsored Sacrilege," 25.

[188] 188. For more on the text, see Tadmor, Landsberger, and Parpola, "Sin of Sargon"; Weaver, "'Sin of Sargon.'"

[189] 189. For Sennacherib as the first, see Cogan, *Imperialism and Religion*, 11; for previous use, see Peter Machinist, "Literature as Politics: The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic and the Bible," *CBQ* 38 (1976): 464.

> For twelve years, against the will of the gods, he (Merodach-Baladan) ruled and administered Babylon, the city of Enlil, lord of the gods. Then Marduk, the great lord, saw the evil enterprises of the land of Chaldea, which he hated, and the (order) was on his lips that his royal scepter, throne, and kingship be taken away. Me, Sargon, the reverent king, he chose from among all kings and exalted me. In order to turn back the feet of the hostile and evil Chaldeans from the land of Sumer and Akkad, he made my weapons mighty.[190]

Likewise, Esarhaddon recounted how Marduk was angry with Babylon and employed a river to destroy the land for seventy years, but then showed mercy and restored it after only eleven years.

> The Enlil of the gods, the god Marduk, became angry and plotted evilly to level the land (and) to destroy its people. The river Araḫtu, (normally) a river of abundance, turned into an angry wave, a raging tide, a huge flood like the deluge. It swept (its) waters destructively across the city (and) its dwellings and turned (them) into ruins. The gods dwelling in it flew up to the heavens like birds; the living in it were hidden in another place and took refuge in an [unknown] land. The merciful god Marduk wrote that the calculated time of its abandonment (should last) 70 years, (but) his heart was quickly soothed, and he reversed the numbers and (thus) ordered its (re)occupation to be (after) 11 years.[191]

8.4.5. Later Empires

Nebuchadnezzar I spoke often about divine abandonment. Against the will of the other gods, Erra killed many of the Nebuchadnezzar I's warriors, causing him to flee battle with the Elamites. "Against the will of the gods, the god Erra, (most) powerful of the gods, smote my [*war*]*riors*."[192] Nebuchadnezzar I declared that the gods had left Babylon. "The lord (Marduk) became angry and (full of) wrath. He commanded and the land was abandoned by its gods."[193] He prayed to Marduk to return to his land. "O lord of Babylon, how long will you dwell in the land of the enemy, May beautiful Babylon be remembered by you! Turn your face back to Esagilia ("House Whose Top Is High"), which you love!" The king records that the god replied to his cries, commanding him to "take me [*from* E]lam to Babylon!," symbolizing his return to Babylon.[194]

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[190] Melville, *Campaigns of Sargon II*, 170; also *ARAB* 2:14, §31; Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 327.

[191] RINAP 4:196, 104, i.34–ii.9a.

[192] RIMB 2:20, 2.4.6, rev.10b–11; also Foster, *Before the Muses*, 382.

[193] RIMB 2:26, 2.4.8, 17–18.

The Babylonian Merodach-baladan (Marduk-apla-iddina II) recounted how Marduk had left his land, but now returned and granted victory to him.

> [At that] time, the great lord, the god Marduk, had turned away in divine wrath from the land of Akkad, and the evil enemy, the Subarian, exercised the rule over the land of Akkad for [*seve*]*n* [years, *unt*]*il* the days had elapsed, the appointed time had arrived, (and) the great [lord], the god Marduk, became reconciled with the land of Akkad, with which he had become angry.
>
> He [Marduk] looked (with favour) upon Marduk-apla-iddina (II), king of Babylon, prince who reveres him, to whom he (the god Marduk) stretched out his hand, legitimate eldest son of Erība-Marduk, king of Babylon, who has made firm the foundation(s) of the land.[195]

Nabopolassar, the founder of the Neo-Babylonian Empire, recounted that the Assyrians had ruled over the Babylonians because of the wrath of the gods.

> The Assyrian, who had, because of the wrath of the gods, ruled the land of Akkad and who had oppressed the people of the land with his heavy yoke—I, the weak, the powerless, who constantly seek after the lord of lords, with the mighty strength of Nabû and Marduk, my lords, I chased them (the Assyrians) out of the land of Akkad and caused (the Babylonians) to throw off their yoke.[196]

The autobiography by Adad-guppi, the mother of Nabonidus, describes how she worshiped Sîn, the moon god and claimed that she cared for the sanctuaries of Sîn in Harran when he became angry with his city and left them. Since this departure was dated to the sixteenth year of Nabopolassar, the event refers to the final defeat of the Assyrian army in Haran at the hands of the Babylonians in 610.[197]

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[194] RIMB 2:18, 2.4.5, 8–10, 17.

[195] RIMB 2:136–37, 6.21.1, 8–13.

[196] Farouk N. H. Al-Rawi, "Nabopolassar's Restoration Work on the Wall 'Imgur-Enlil' at Babylon," *Iraq* 47 (1985): 5 (Babylon 11 cyl. A, i.28–ii.5); see also *COS* 2.121:307–8; *ANEHST*, 383–85; Vanderhooft, *Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets*, 24–25; Rocío Da Riva, *The Neo-Babylonian Royal Inscriptions: An Introduction*, GMTR 4 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008), 5–6.

> I am Adad-guppi, mother of Nabunaid, king of Babylon, a worshipper of Sin, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna, my gods, for whose divinity I have cared since my youth.
>
> Whereas in the sixteenth year of Nabopolassar, king of Babylon, Sin, the king of the gods, became angry with his city and his house, and went up to heaven (with the result that) the city and its people were transformed into a ruin. During that time I cared for the sanctuaries of Sin, Ningal, Nusku, and Sadarnunna, since I revered their deity. Sin, the king of the gods, I was constantly beseeching. I daily, without fail, cared for his great deity. I was a worshipper of Sin, Šamaš, Ištar, and Adad all my life (whether) in heaven or earth. My fine possessions that they gave to me, I gave back to them, daily, nightly, monthly, yearly. I was continually beseeching Sin. Gazing at him prayerfully and in humility, I knelt before them. Thus (I said): "May your return to your city take place. May the black-headed people worship your great divinity." In order to appease the heart of my god and my goddess, I did not put on a garment of excellent wool, silver, gold, a fresh garment; I did not allow perfumes (or) fine oil to touch my body. I was clothed in a torn garment. My fabric was sackcloth. I proclaimed their praises. The fame of my god and goddess were set (firmly) in my heart. I stood their watch. I served them food.[198]

In the most famous Persian inscription (the Cyrus Cylinder), Cyrus claimed that Marduk had left his people because of the evil acts of the Babylonian king Nabonidus in regard to his mistreatment of the cult of Marduk and oppression of the people of Babylon. In his place, Marduk chose Cyrus to be the king of Babylon to restore peace and prosperity for the people of Babylon. Cyrus emphasized that he entered the city without a battle and that the people rejoiced to see him.[199] Although divine abandonment is not mentioned directly, Darius wrote an inscription in which the gods of Egypt had given Egypt to him to rule. To further this ideological view, most of the inscription was written in hieroglyphs (DSab).[200]

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[197] However, the autobiography was at least partly fictional; see Tremper Longman III, *Fictional Akkadian Autobiography* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1991), 97–103.

[198] Ibid., 225–26; also *ANET*, 560–62; *ANEHST*, 391–93.

[199] *COS* 2.124:315–16; *ANET*, 315–16; *ANEHST*, 428–29; Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 70–72.

8.4.6. West Semitic

In the Mesha Stela, the Moabite king claimed that Israel had conquered part of the Moabite land because "Kemosh was angry with his land."[201] As established in the Mosaic covenant, when the people of Israel did not follow YHWH then their god would leave them to their fate (Deut 28:25–34), a theme that was emphasized in the prophets.[202] When Solomon followed other gods, YHWH was angry with him and raised up enemies against him (1 Kgs 11:9–40). Later during the reign of Jehu, the narrator records that YHWH "began to trim off parts of Israel" by giving them to Aram (2 Kgs 10:32) and under his son Jehoahaz he "gave them repeatedly into the hands of King Hazael of Aram, then into the hands of Ben-hadad son of Hazael" (2 Kgs 13:3). When Israel fell to Assyria, the narrator of 2 Kings wrote at length about why YHWH allowed it to happen (2 Kgs 17). Finally, YHWH punished Judah for the sins of Manasseh when Jehoiakim rebelled against the Babylonians.

> The LORD sent against him bands of the Chaldeans, bands of the Arameans, bands of the Moabites, and bands of the Ammonites; he sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the LORD that he spoke by his servants the prophets. Surely this came upon Judah at the command of the LORD, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, for all that he had committed, and also for the innocent blood that he had shed; for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD was not willing to pardon (2 Kgs 24:2–4 NRSV)

8.5. Divine Weapons and Incorporation into the Myths

Since the gods were divine warriors, they possessed divine weapons that they used to defeat their enemies. The kings sometimes described their own weapons in metaphorical terms as those given to them by the gods. However, there were also various actual weapons in temples (and sometimes taken on campaign) that were viewed as divine weapons, signifying that the power of the god would be with the king in battle. Since the divine combat myths supported the legitimacy of the dynasties, later kings strengthened their connection with their divine warriors by comparing themselves to the victorious divine warriors and their enemies to the defeated monsters, effectively writing themselves into the script of the divine combat myths.[203]

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[200] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 477–79.

[201] *COS* 2.23:137; *ANEHST*, 312–13.

[202] For a study of how the theme appears in Ezekiel, see Daniel Block, "Divine Abandonment: Ezekiel's Adaptation of an Ancient Near Eastern Motif," in *The Book of Ezekiel: Theological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Margaret S. Odell and John T. Strong, SymS 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 15–42.

8.5.1. Egyptian

The motif of a god passing a divine weapon to a pharaoh is common in both Egyptian texts and reliefs (figs. 8.14 and 8.15).[204] Horemheb depicted himself standing before Amun, who hands him the sickle sword.[205] A relief of Seti I records Amun's words to the pharaoh while the god holds out a sword to the king: "Receive unto yourself the scimitar, (O) mighty king, as your mace has smitten the Nine Bows!"[206] In another text from Seti I, Amun told him "My mace is in [your right hand, my club is in] your [left]."[207] Merenptah recorded a dream in which Ptah provided him with a sword.[208] Ramesses III wrote that Amun promised to give him his sword. "I give to you my Sword as a shield for your breast, while I remain as the magical protection of your body in every battle."[209] A somewhat broken relief of Ramesses III at Karnak depicts Amun-Re handing the pharaoh a sickle-sword.[210] In his reliefs at Karnak, Sheshonq I chronicled that Amun

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[203] For a recent study of this phenomenon, see Ballentine, *Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition*.

[204] The *khophesh* sword is often involved in these scenes; see Vogel, "Icon of Propaganda and Lethal Weapon," 72–79.

[205] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:161; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 240.

[206] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 4*, 51, pl. 15.

[207] "Karnak, Triumph Scene and Topographical List, W. Side," *RITA* 1.Seti I.11:24.

[208] *ARE* 3.245; "Great Libyan War Inscription, Karnak," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.2:5.

[209] "Medinet Habu Pylon, Southern Triumphal-Scene and Topographical List," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.27:72; for a similar text, see also "Karnak, Ramessesses III's Amun-Temple: W. Tower, Triumph-Scene and List," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.36:84–85.

[210] Epigraphic Survey, *Reliefs and Inscriptions at Karnak 1: Ramses III's Temple*

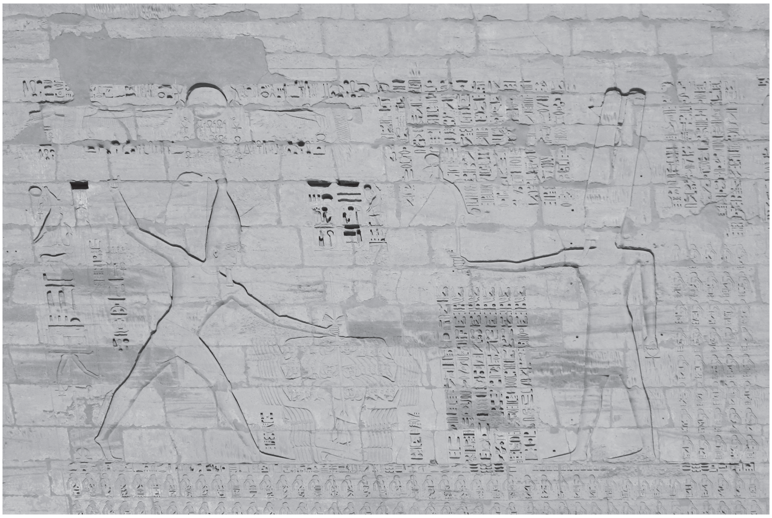

Fig. 8.14. Amun holding divine weapon before Ramesses III. Medinet Habu, Egypt. Photo courtesy of Olaf Tausch, Wikimedia Commons.

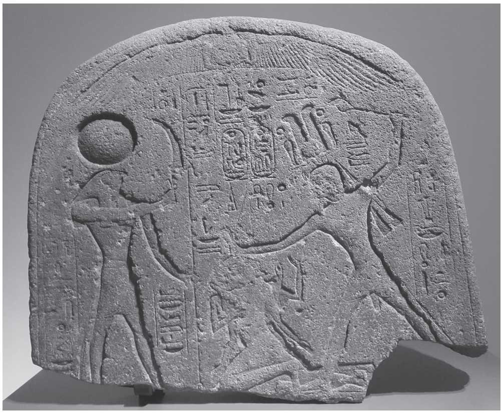

Fig. 8.15. Horus holding divine weapon before Ramesses II. Beirut National Museum. Photo courtesy of Emna Mizouni, Wikimedia Commons.

told him "With my mighty sword, you have struck every land in a feat of victory."[211] Likewise, his son Osorkon I inscribed at Karnak a message from Amun: "To you I have given my sword and my power."[212]

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with the Great Inclosure of Amon, Part I, OIP 25 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), pl. 46.

[211] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 204; also *COS* 4.3:15.

[212] Ritner, *Libyan Anarchy*, 230.

Since the pharaoh was a viewed as a divine office, the connection between the king and the divine combat myths was inherently more closely connected than in other parts of the ancient Near East. The pyramid texts highlight this connection, with the pharaoh standing in for Osiris, as in this pyramid text from the tomb of Teti (a pharaoh of the Sixth Dynasty). Horus acts as the war god (a variety of other gods also support the pharaoh), while Seth stands in as the enemy.

> Ho, Osiris Teti! Horus has come seeking you. He has made Thoth drive back Seth's followers for you, he has gotten them corralled for you, and has turned away the desire of Seth. You are greater than he, for you have emerged in precedence to him and your character has precedence over him. Geb has seen your character and has put you in your (proper) place. Geb has gotten for you your two sisters to your side—they are Isis and Nephthys. Horus has made the gods join you: they shall be brotherly to you in your identity of him of the Flagpole Shrine and not reject you in your identity of him of the Dual Shrines. He has made the gods tend you. Geb has put his sandal on the head of your opponent so that he is turned away for you. Your son Horus has struck him and has taken his eye from him and given it to you, that you might become ba through it and take control through it at the fore of the akhs. Horus has had you seize your opponents, and there shall be none of them who will turn the back to you.[213]

Even beyond this connection, references to pharaohs acting like the gods are also common. When Thutmose IV went to fight a Nubian rebel, he traveled on the Nile "like Rēʾ when he goes aboard the night barque."[214] A relief from Beit El-Wali depicts Ramesses II chasing fleeing Nubians.[215] Above a Nubian woman and a wounded man is inscribed "We have not yet known (such) raging of the Ruler. He is like Seth in the sky."[216] In the poem account of the battle of Qadesh, Ramesses II compares himself to

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[213] James P. Allen, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, WAW 23 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 72 (Teti 145).

[214] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 3*, 251–52 (Konosso Stela); also see *ARE* 2:328.

[215] Wreszinski, *Atlas zur altägyptischen Kulturgeschichte*, 2:165; Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, pl. 8; Heinz, *Feldzugsdarstellungen des Neuen Reiches*, 261.

[216] Ricke, Hughes, and Wente, *Beit El-Wali Temple*, 11.

Baal in battle, as well as Re appearing at dawn and destroying the rebels.[217] Not only did Amun promise Ramesses III his sword (see above), but also invoked the power of Seth. "I cause them to see Your Majesty in victory like Seth slaying the Rebel (Serpent) at the prow of the Night Barque."[218] Ramesses III also said that "His majesty is like an enraged lion, attacking his assailant with his arms: plundering on his right hand and powerful on his left hand, like Seth destroying the serpent 'Evil of Character.'"[219] Finally, the Leiden Hymns describe the nightly journey of Amun-Re in terms that are easily applicable to all enemies of Egypt and are often employed by the pharaohs themselves, emphasizing the connection between the divine victory and the conquest of the pharaoh over his enemies.

> The harpoon is in the Serpent, who falls to God's knife; rebels are given the sword by those who wreak slaughter.
> He puts death in the hearts of his enemies so that they [groan] as outcasts forever.
> He has caused that their injuries surely be lasting to punish his opponents, his own heart exulting.
>
> The shrine of God is safe, the Mighty One celebrates, Rê is triumphant, there are no enemies of his;
> The Bark of Millions of Years has good sailing, the divine crew rejoicing, their hearts filled with gladness.
> Felled is the Adversary of the Lord of All; no enemy of his exists in heaven or on earth.[220]

8.5.2. Hittite

References to divine weapons are limited in Hittite literature. In a prayer to the Sun Goddess of Arinna, Hattusili III referred briefly to previous kings "to whom the Storm-god had given the weapon."[221] References to mythic material are also not as common as in other cultures. As noted in §3.4.2.2,

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[217] *COS* 2.5A:37.

[218] "Medinet Habu Pylon, Southern Triumphal-Scene and Topographical List," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.27:73.

[219] *ANET*, 263; also "Campaign against the Sea Peoples: Medinet Habu Scenes, Sea Battle and Victory," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.7:28.

[220] Foster, *Hymns, Prayers, and Songs*, 71–72.

[221] Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 100 (*CTH* 383).

Hattusili I recounted that he crossed the Euphrates on foot at the head of his troops, something that he said Sargon the Great had also done (though he then said that Sargon had not destroyed Hahha like he had).[222] The Hittite kings might have undertaken ambitious military campaigns following the pattern of Sargon, as exemplified by Mursili I's defeat of Aleppo and Babylon, far away from the Hittite homeland.[223]

8.5.3. Early Mesopotamia

References to divine weapons abound in early Mesopotamia.[224] Sargon the Great recounted that he "conquered fifty governors with the mace of the god Ilaba."[225] Naram-Sin employed several divine weapons in his attacks against his enemies. "By means of the weapons of the god Dagān, who magnifies his kingship, Narām-Sîn, the mighty, conquered Armānum and Ebla."[226] Likewise, Dadusha, a king of Eshnunna, recorded that he defeated the enemy "with the strong weapon of warrior Tishpak and Adad, my god." [227] The Babylonian king Samsu-iluna says he received a weapon from the gods. "On account of this the gods An, Enlil, Marduk, Enki, and goddess Inanna determined as his destiny (and) gave to him a mighty weapon that has no rival (and) a life that like (that of) the gods Nannu and Utu is eternal."[228] The divine weapon also played a role in legal proceedings as a place to swear oaths: if the oath-taker broke the oath, then the divine weapon would assault them.[229]

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[222] *ANEHST*, 221 (*KBo* 10.2 iii 29–36; *CTH* 4.II.A); Beal, *Organization of the Hittite Military*, 298; for more on how the Hittites might have learned about Sargon and why they appealed to his memory, see Beckman, "Sargon and Naram-Sin in Ḫatti."

[223] Amir Gilan, "Epic and History in Hittite Anatolia: In Search of a Local Hero," in *Epic and History*, ed. David Konstan and Kurt A. Raaflaub, AWCH (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010), 53.

[224] Maria Grazia Masetti-Rouault, "Armes et armées des dieux dans les traditions mésopotamiennes," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 219–29; Joanna Töyräänvuori, "Weapons of the Storm God in Ancient Near Eastern and Biblical Traditions," *StOr* 112 (2012): 147–80.

[225] RIME 2:13, E2.1.1.2, 15–18.

[226] RIME 2:133, 2.1.4.26, i.30–ii.7; also *COS* 2.91:244–46.

[227] *ANEHST*, 99.

[228] RIME 4 (391, 4.3.7.8, 77–89.

[229] On the use of divine weapons in legal contexts, see Rivkah Harris, "The Journey of the Divine Weapon," in Güterbock, *Studies in Honor of Berno Landsberger*,

The clearest connection between the use of the divine weapon to defeat divine enemies and its deposition with a king is found in a Mari prophecy by Adad to Zimri-Lim. After disclosing how he had taken away land from the king (see above under divine abandonment in §8.4.3), Adad declared that he had given his weapons to the king. "I restored you to the th[rone of your father's house], and the weapon[s] with which I fought with Sea I handed you. I anointed you with the oil of my luminosity, nobody will offer resistance to you."[230] A pair of reliefs found in a temple at Aleppo might also refer to the handing over of the divine weapon to the king.[231] In one relief the storm god is portrayed as an armed divine warrior by himself, while in the other relief the storm god and the king both appear unarmed but in martial poses. Most likely, the missing weapon would have been concretely present in the temple itself. One letter (A.1858 = LAPO 18.982 = Sasson 5.4.d.ii.1) reports that the weapons of Addu had arrived in Terqa in the temple of Dagan.[232]

Various kings invoked the Anzu-bird (described above in §8.1.3) in descriptions of themselves, such as Shu-sin: "Against [their] cities he himself screeched like the Anzu bird." [233] A hymn about Shulgi also compares him to the Anzu-bird. "When you shrieked like the Anzu-bird, who could stand before you?"[234]

217–24; Martin Stol, "Renting the Divine Weapon as a Prebend," in *The Ancient Near East, A Life! Festscrift Karel Van Lerberghe*, ed. Tom Boiy et al., OLA 220 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 561–83; Kitz, *Cursed Are You!*, 56–61.

[230] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 22 (A.1968 = FM 7.38 = Sasson 5.7.b.iii); also *ANEHST*, 126–27; *COS* 4.47:227–28; Foster, *Before the Muses*, 144. However, since Adad was not Zimri-Lim's patron, the historical background of the text is more complicated than it first appears; for a discussion see Ballentine, *Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition*, 115–16.

[231] For a summary of the reliefs, see Töyräänvuori, "Weapons of the Storm God," 161–62.

[232] For a study of the divine and royal weapons in Terqa, see Olivier Rouault and Benedetta Bellucci, "Les Armes de Terqa," in Abrahami, *Armées du Proche-Orient ancien*, 113–33.

[233] RIME 3.2:304, E3.2.1.4.3, iv.8–10.

[234] Klein, *Three Šulgi Hymns*, 142–43 (Šulgi X, 113).

8.5.4. Assyrian

Assyrian texts refer frequently to divine weapons being granted to the kings and used in battle. Shalmaneser III boasted that “With the exalted might of the divine standard which goes before me (and) with the fierce weapons which Aššur my lord gave to me, I fought (and) defeated them.”[235] Sargon II struck down the Arab tribes with “the weapon of Aššur.”[236] Assur granted Sennacherib a bow to use in battle.[237] Ishtar gave Esarhaddon “a strong bow (and) a mighty arrow,” while Assur provided him with “a terrible staff to strike the enemy.”[238] After the flight of the Egyptian king Taharqa to an unknown location, Assurbanipal claimed that he died there because the “terror of the weapon of Ashur” overcame him.[239] Assurbanipal also wrote to Bel-ibni that he had conquered his enemies with “the iron dagger of Ashur.”[240] A Neo-Assyrian commentary on a ritual describes the divine weapons (SAA 3.37):

> The torches, which he lights from the brazier, are merciless arrows from the quiver of Marduk, which are terrible in their shooting off and which, when they hit, slay (even) the strong; drenched in blood and gore, they rain down on mountains and lands. The gods, his fathers and brothers, and the evil gods, Anzû and Asakku, were vanquished by them.

Another important aspect of the divine weapon was the placement of the divine weapon in a conquered location as a reminder of the power of Assur.[241] For example, after conquering Illubru, Sennacherib settled foreigners in the city and said that, “I installed the weapon of the god Aššur, my lord, inside.”[242]

Many of the Assyrian kings also invoked the divine combat myths in their texts, especially by comparing themselves to Marduk and their enemies to Tiamat in Enuma Elish.[243] A Neo-Assyrian commentary on a ritual identifies the Neo-Assyrian king with Marduk, including his role in battle. One section recalls Enuma Elish (SAA 3.37): "The king, who opens the vat in the race, is Marduk, who [defeat]ed Tiamat with his penis." Other Assyrians also connected themselves with Marduk; a prominent example is exorcists who called on Marduk to cast out demons.[244] The dismemberment of enemies might recall the cutting of Tiamat by Marduk.[245]

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[235] RIMA 3:16, A.0.102.2, i.44–45.

[236] *ARAB* 2:7, §17; also Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 320.

[237] RINAP 3.2:333, 230, 64.

[238] RINAP 4:184–85, 98, rev.28, 33–35.

[239] Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 37; also *ARAB* 2:324, §844; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 214.

[240] Pfeiffer, *State Letters of Assyria*, 31 (*ABL* 292 = *SLA* 35).

[241] For more on this, see Holloway, *Aššur Is King! Aššur Is King!*, 160–77.

[242] RINAP 3.1:136, 17, iv.89.

In the destruction of the people of Katmuhu, the early Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser I described himself as a "storm demon" (*ra-ḫi-ṣi),* the same term used to describe one of the horses of Marduk in Enuma Elish (IV.52).[246] The Assyrian king Assurnasirpal II fought against the city of Dirru and records that "I thundered against them like the god Adad-of-the-Devastation (and) rained down flames upon them. With might and main my combat troops flew against them like the Storm Bird."[247] In the introduction to an inscription, Shalmaneser III boasted that he "conquered the upper and lower sea."[248] Presumably he meant that he reached the seas, but the wording brings the reader back to the defeat of chaos in the myths. In another inscription, he describes how Ahunu, a leader from Bit-Adini, fled to the city Shitamrat, located on a mountain peak. The Assyrian king records that his soldiers "flew up against them like the *anzu*-bird" to defeat him there.[249]

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[243] For more details on these parallels, see Elnathan Weissert, "Creating a Political Climate: Literary Allusions to *Enuma Elish* in Sennacherib's Account of the Battle of Halule," in Waetzoldt, *Assyrien im Wandel der Zeiten*, 191–202; Stefan M. Maul, "Der assyrische König—Hüter der Weltordnung," in *Priests and Officials in the Ancient Near East: Papers of the Second Colloquium on the Ancient Near East; the City and Its Life Held at the Middle Eastern Culture Center in Japan (Mitaka, Tokyo), March 22–24, 1996*, ed. Kazuko Watanabe (Heidelberg: Winter, 1999), 210–13; Crouch, *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East*, 35–64, 119–55; Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*; Karlsson, *Relations of Power*, 119. For possible parallels with the Epic of Gilgamesh, see Amitai Baruchi-Unna, "Crossing the Boundaries: Literary Allusions to the Epic of Gilgamesh in the Accounts of Esarhaddon's Egyptian Campaign," in Cogan, *Treasures on Camels' Humps*, 54–65.

[244] See, e.g., Markham J. Geller, *Evil Demons: Canonical* Utukkū Lemnūtu *Incantations*, SAACT 5 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2007), 194–96.

[245] De Backer, "Fragmentation of the Enemy," 401–3.

[246] RIMA 2:17, A.0.87.1, iii.25.

[247] RIMA 2:210, A.0.101.1, 106–107.

[248] RIMA 3:7–8, A.0.102.1, 7–8.

[249] RIMA 3:29, A.0.102.5, iii.5.

During Sennacherib's first campaign, he described his enemy Marduk-apla-iddina as "the (very) image of an evil *gallû*-demon."[250] When he attacked him Sennacherib says that "I raged up like a lion and became furious like the Deluge (*a-bu-bi-iš*)."[251] In an attack on Elam, Sennacherib said "I roared [loudly] like a storm (and) thun[dered] like the god Adad. [By the command of the god Aššur, the great lord, my lord], I blew [like the onset of a severe storm against the] enemy. With the weapon of the god Aššu[r, my lord, and my fierce battle array, I turned them back and] made them [retre]at."[252] Finally, he says that terror overwhelmed his Babylonian opponent "like *alû*-demons."[253] Most likely, this high concentration of references to Enuma Elish provided him with the ideological foundation for his harsh treatment of Babylon.[254] Even more directly, Sennacherib recorded that he built an *akītu*-house for the sake of remembering Assur's defeat of Tiamat, including an image on a gate of Assur defeating Tiamat.[255] He also discussed building a replica of the Tablet of Destinies.[256]

8.5.5. Later Empires

Nabopolassar recorded that Marduk "made (me) hold a mighty staff to subdue the unsubmissive."[257] In another inscription he stated that he killed Assyrians "with the mighty weapon of the awe-inspiring Erra, who strikes my enemies with lightning."[258] Likewise, Neriglissar said that Marduk "let my hands hold an *ušparu*-staff, who subdues the enemy."[259] Various temple records refer to deified weapons, such as a divine staff and divine quiver, in ritual and legal contexts.[260] The motif of a divine weapon seems to be rare among the Persians.

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[250] RINAP 3.1:33, 1, 17.

[251] RINAP 3.1:34, 1, 25; see also ibid., 3.1:213.

[252] RINAP 3.2:333, 230, 65–67.

[253] RINAP, 3.2:334, 230, 96.

[254] Weissert, "Creating a Political Climate," 202; Crouch, *War and Ethics in the Ancient Near East*, 126–30.

[255] RINAP 3.2:223–25, 160.

[256] RINAP 3.2:219–20, 158.

[257] Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar*, 75.

[258] Ibid., 88.

[259] Ibid., 119.

[260] Beaulieu, *Pantheon of Uruk*, 351–53.

8.5.6. West Semitic

Several weapons were found in sanctuaries in Ugarit, which might have been viewed as divine weapons.[261] A king of Alalakh refers to defeating his enemies with the help of a divine weapon.[262] The Old Testament assigns several divine weapons to YHWH, including a bow and arrows, a mace, and a spear (Hab 3:9–11) and foreign nations, such as Assyria, are called the "the rod of my anger" (Isa 10:5).[263] In spite of these texts, the Old Testament records YHWH giving his weapon to a human leader in only one case, and that was only in a highly restricted sense. When YHWH addressed Moses at the burning bush, he commanded Moses to perform a series of signs with his shepherd staff (Exod 4:2–4). A little later, he ordered Moses to take "this staff" with him when he went to Egypt (Exod 4:17), and the narrator records that he left with "the staff of God" (Exod 4:20). It appears that YHWH consecrated Moses's staff to become the staff of God, which Moses then employed before several of the plagues. However, Moses only used the staff after YHWH instructed him how to use it each time, and eventually he was censured by YHWH when he used the staff incorrectly (Num 20:1–13).[264] It is also possible that the "commander of YHWH's army" in Josh 5:13–15 gave his sword to Joshua as part of a royal ritual.[265] If this theory was correct, it would explain the origin of the "javelin" (כידון) that Joshua held up in a later battle. However, the text provides little indication that he is handing Joshua a weapon and the words of the general focus attention on the need for Joshua to submit to YHWH's instructions, not on giving Joshua greater ability to fight. As noted in §8.1.6, the Old Testament commonly refers to the divine combat stories involving YHWH the divine warrior. On some occasions the kings apply these stories to their own reign, especially in poetic texts.[266] For example, a psalmist praised YHWH for his defeat of Rahab and ruling over the sea (Ps 89:10–12 [ET 9–11]); later in the psalm YHWH promises to crush the Davidic king's enemies and to give him authority over the sea (Ps 89:24–26 [ET 23–25]). Ezekiel described the pharaoh as a great dragon crouching in the Nile (Ezek 29:3), appealing to the *tannin* that YHWH had defeated (Ps 74:13).

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[261] Jordi Vidal, "Ugarit at War (4): Weapons in Sanctuaries," *UF* 43 (2011): 449–57.

[262] Wiseman, *Alalakh Tablets*, 25, no. 1.

[263] For a list of references to divine weapons in the Old Testament, see Töyräänvuori, "Weapons of the Storm God," 167–72.

[264] For more on this, see Trimm, *YHWH Fights for Them!*, 101–6.

[265] Thomas Römer, "Joshua's Encounter with the Commander of Yhwh's Army (Josh 5:13–15): Literary Construction or Reflection of a Royal Ritual?," in Kelle, *Warfare, Ritual, and Symbol*, 49–63.

[266] Ballentine, *Conflict Myth and the Biblical Tradition*, 116–21.

8.6. Presence in Battle

Finally, beyond speaking words of encouragement and providing their weapons to the kings, the gods also sometimes became more actively involved in battle. Kings referred to their gods being present in battle, either literally through the presence of divine standards that were often carried with armies into battle (these standards were discussed in §4.2) or speaking of their presence strengthening their army. In a few cases, the gods intervene directly in the battle through some aspect of nature.

8.6.1. Egyptian

Pharaohs often spoke of Amun and other gods encouraging them through their presence in battle. Thutmose III said that Amun protected his body in battle and Seth gave his arms strength.[267] A statue of a large seated Amun with a much smaller Tutankhamen in front of him might illustrate how this protection was visualized (Louvre E11609). A speech by Amun to Seti I records how he made the king appear to the enemy in the form of several terrifying images, including a shooting star, a young bull, a crocodile, a blast of fire, and a divine griffin.[268] Another speech refers to Amun putting the fear of Seti I into the hearts of his enemies.[269] In the poem account of the battle of Qadesh, Ramesses II referred to Amun as his protector and the god's hand with him in battle.[270]

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[267] *COS* 2.2A: 11.

[268] "Karnak, Triumph-Scene and Topographical List, E. Side," *RITA* 1.Seti I.10:22.

[269] "Karnak, Triumph-Scene and Topographical List, W. Side," *RITA* 1.Seti I.11:24.

[270] *COS* 2.5A:35–36; for a suggestion on how divine intervention is portrayed the reliefs of the battle of Qadesh, see C. Broadhurst, "Religious Considerations at Qadesh, and the Consequences for the Artistic Depiction of the Battle," in Lloyd, *Studies in Pharaonic Religion*, 77–81.

Ramesses III recorded Amun's promise to help him in battle. "I cause them to see Your Majesty like the sky, when it is clouded ('hidden') and pregnant with a storm, (so that) it has removed even the trees from their roots. I cause them to see Your Majesty as the strength of Horus and Seth, (so that) the Bows are laid out for you, through your renown."[271] In his account of the battle against the Sea-People, he said concerning the group that attacked by land "Amen-Re was after them, destroying them."[272] Merenptah refers to "every god being his magical protection."[273]

According to Herodotus a god protected Egypt by sending field mice to attack an Assyrian army (*Hist.* 2.141), though the trustworthiness of the account is uncertain. One of the rare accounts of direct intervention by a god against the enemy is in the Gebel Barkal Stela, where Thutmose III described a shooting star affecting the battle against some Asiatic enemies.

> There were two skywatchers. A star came approaching to the south of them. The like had never occurred before. It shot straight at them and no one among them could stand. It slew as if they had never existed, they being prostrate in their blood and falling down prone. Now the uraeus was behind them with fire in their faces; no single man among them could retaliate, no one looked around./ They had no more teams of horses, these having bolted in terror to the mountain. (Such is the miracle that Amun did for me, his beloved son) in order to cause the inhabitants of the foreign lands to see the power of my Majesty.[274]

8.6.2. Hittite

The Hittites had many warrior gods who played a role in battle.[275] In the Deeds of Suppiluliuma the Hittite king Mursili II frequently recounted how the gods helped his father Suppiluliuma in battle. For example, in a battle against the Kaska, "The gods marched before my father, (so that) he defeated the aforementioned Kaška enemy, the tribal troops, wherever he caught them." [276] Elsewhere in the text, the gods helped two Hittite generals (Urawanni and Kuwalana-ziti): "The gods of my father marched before them, so that they conquered all of the land of Kašula and brought its people, cattle, and sheep before my father."[277] In his annals, Mursili II claimed similar divine presence for his own battles. In his third year, he fought the town of Peshuru and said that, "The Sun-Goddess of Arinna, My Lady, the Powerful Storm-God, My Lord, Mezzulla and all the gods ran before me."[278] A scoffing reference to a dog running ahead of the troops in the siege of Urshu might be a parody of the motif of the gods running ahead of the Hittites.[279] An inscription of Suppiluliuma records that "the Storm-god put his hand on me," enabling him to win the battle. The inscription is on a relief depicting the Storm God holding the king's hand in the air, perhaps reflecting this theme.[280]

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[271] "Medinet Habu Pylon, Southern Triumphal-Scene and Topographical List," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.27:72.

[272] "First Libyan War: Great Inscription of Year 5," *RITA* 5.Ramesses III.4:22.

[273] "Great Libyan War Inscription, Karnak," *RITA* 4.Merneptah.2:2.

[274] Cumming, *Egyptian Historical Records of the Later Eighteenth Dynasty: Fascicle 1*, 4–5, §365 (Gebel Barkal Stela); also *COS* 2.2B:14–18; *ANET*, 238, 240.

[275] For more on the identity of these various Hittite warrior gods, see Haas, *Geschichte der Hethitischen Religion*, 363–72.

The Hittite records incorporate a few stories about direct divine intervention. In the Ten Year Annals of Mursili II, the Hittite king entered into conflict in his third year with Uhhaziti, the king of Arzawa, over the matter of refugees. After Mursili II called on the Storm God to "decide the lawsuit," the divine warrior acted on his behalf.

> When I had set out and arrived at Mt. Lawasa, the Storm-God, My Lord, made manifest his providence. He launched a lightning bolt, and my army saw the lightning bolt, as did the land of Arzawa. The lightning bolt traveled and struck the land of Arzawa, (in particular) Apasa, the city of Uhha-ziti. Uhha-ziti fell on his knees and became ill, and being ill, he did not come against me in battle again. Rather, he dispatched his son Piyama-Kurunta against me, together with infantry and chariotry.

After the Hittite king defeated the son, Mursili II went to the city of Uhhaziti, at which point Uhhaziti fled into the sea.[281] In another example from Mursili II, the Storm God hid his troops while they approached the enemy through mists and clouds, but then removed the cloud just when his army arrived at the battlefield so they could fight.[282] Another Hittite example of direct divine intervention involves Hattusili. "Shaushga of Shamuha, my lady, revealed also then her divine justice: in the very moment I reached him, the wooden fortifications fell down to the length of one *gipeššar*."[283]

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[276] *COS* 1.74:187 (*CTH* 40).

[277] *COS* 1.74:189 (*CTH* 40); see also *ANEHST*, 236.

[278] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline, *Ahhiyawa Texts*, 13 (*CTH* 61.I.A); see also *COS* 2.16:85; *ANEHST*, 254–55.

[279] For the text see Beckman, "Siege of Uršu Text," 25.

[280] Belkıs Dinçol et al., "Two New Inscribed Storm-God Stelae from Arsuz (İskenderun): ARSUZ 1 and 2," *AnSt* 65 (2015): 65.

[281] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline, *Ahhiyawa Texts*, 15 (*CTH* 61.I.A); see also *COS* 2.16:85; *ANEHST*, 255.

8.6.3. Early Mesopotamian

Naram-Sin proclaimed that he won by the verdict of his gods. "By the verdict of the goddess Aštar-Annunītum, Narām-Sîn, the mighty, [was vict]orious over the Kišite in battle at TiWA."[284] Ashduni-iarim, an early Mesopotamian king of Kish, refers to the help of his gods in battle. "When the god Zababa, my lord, made a (favorable) judgment for me and the goddess Eštar, my lady, came to my help."[285] In a letter from Mari, Yeshkit-El ascribed the success of the siege of Larse to the god of Zimri-Lim going ahead of his troops, an unusual reference to divine intervention in the Mari letters. "Today the god of my lord ⸢went⸣ in front of the army of my lord, and the lance of fiend and foe has been broken."[286] Ibal-El wrote to Zimri-Lim that "Dagan, Addu, and Iturmer are marching in support of my lord."[287] Ripʾi-Lim claimed that his lord was victorious because the gods Dagan and Itur-Mer ordered it (A.489 = Sasson 5.6.a.ii). In a legend about Sargon, he faced unexpected opposition from nature, which opposed him in a variety of ways after he had gone to Simurrum. However, he was eventually successful and defeated the land of Simurrum through the help of nature. "(When) as if he were hostile, the forest waged war against him. It set darkness in place of the light of the heavens. The sun dimmed, the stars sallied forth against the enemy."[288]

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[282] Philo H. J. Houwink ten Cate, "Mursilis' Northwestern Campaigns—Additional Fragments of His Comprehensive Annals Concerning the Nerik Region," in *Florilegium Anatolicum: Mélanges offerts à Emannuel Laroche* (Paris: de Boccard, 1979), 163–64.

[283] Liverani, *Prestige and Interest*, 155 (*KBo* VI.29; *CTH* 85).

[284] RIME 2:104–8, E2.1.4.5, ii.14'–22'; also Foster, *Before the Muses*, 60; Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 234–35.

[285] RIME 4:656, 4.8.1.2, 21–26.

[286] Heimpel, *Letters to the King of Mari*, 334 (ARM 26.386 = Sasson 3.1.a.1).

[287] Sasson, *From the Mari Archives*, 269 (A.1068 = Sasson 5.6.a.i).

[288] Westenholz, *Legends of the Kings of Akkade*, 71.

8.6.4. Assyrian

According to Esarhaddon, divine warriors (including Assur, Sin, Shamash, Marduk, Nergal, and Ishtar) provided him with strength, fame, glory, and ferocity.[289] Earlier, in the Tukulti-Ninurta I Epic, the Assyrian king had described how each of his gods played a role in the battle.

> Assur went first, the conflagration of defeat burst out upon the enemy,
> Enlil was whirling (?) in the midst of the foe, fanning the blaze,
> Anu set a pitiless mace to the opponent,
> Sin, the luminary, laid upon them the tension of battle.
> Adad, the hero, made wind and flood pour down over their fighting,
> Shamash, lord of judgment, blinded the eyesight of the army of Sumer and Akkad,
> Valiant Ninurta, vanguard of the gods, smashed their weapons,
> Ishtar flailed her jump rope, driving their warriors berserk![290]

The god Assur appears in reliefs helping the Assyrian king, often in the same pose as the king (fig. 8.16).[291] According to Tiglath-pileser III, the *melammu* (brilliance) of Assur overwhelmed an enemy, causing him to surrender: "fear of the brilliance of (the god) Aššur, my lord, overwhelmed him and he came to the city Sapīya (Šapīya), before me, and kissed my feet."[292] Likewise, the brilliance of Assur caused the Elamites to surrender to Assurbanipal.[293]

At other times the gods attacked their enemies even away from the battlefield. Sargon II said that "Ursâ of Urartu,—the splendor of Assur, my lord, overwhelmed him and with his own iron dagger he stabbed himself through the heart, like a pig, and ended his life."[294] After Sennacherib was unable to reach Elam due to heavy rain and snow, the Assyrian king said that "at the command of the god Aššur, my lord" the Elamite king Kudur-Nahundu died after only three months.[295] According to Esarhaddon, when

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[289] RINAP 4:15, 1, ii.30–39; *COS* 4.39:175.

[290] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 313–14.

[291] *ANEP*, 180, no. 536 (BM 115706); see also BM 124555.

[292] RINAP 1:120, 47, 27.

[293] *ARAB* 2:305–6, §800; *COS* 4.41:189; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 237.

[294] *ARAB* 2:10, §22; also Fuchs, *Inschriften Sargons II*, 322.

[295] RINAP 3.1:181, 22, v.11b–16.

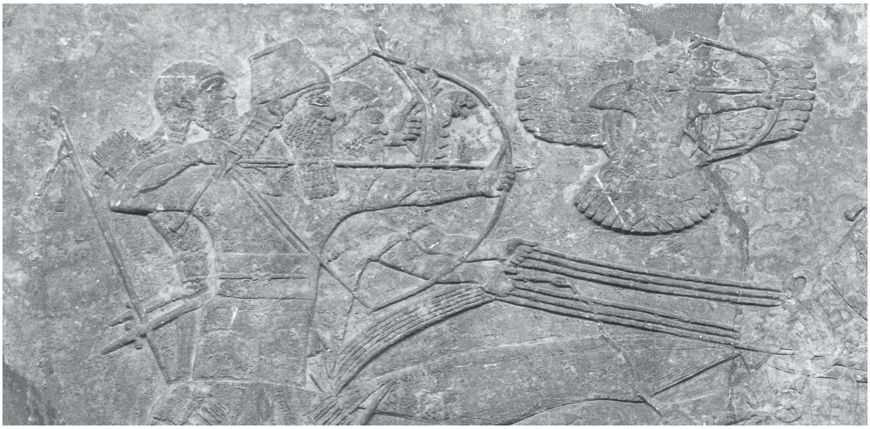

Fig. 8.16. Assur shooting the enemy with Assurnasirpal II. BM 124540. Photo courtesy of Hannah and Faith Grady.

the Babylonian king Nabu-zer-kitti-lishir fled to Elam, the gods killed him there: “Because of the oath of the great gods which he had transgressed, the gods Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Bēl, and Nabû imposed a grievous punishment on him and they killed him with the sword in the midst of the land Elam.”[296] On another occasion, Esarhaddon said that Bel-iqisha, a Gambulian king, surrendered to him because “by the command of the god Aššur, my lord, unprovoked fear fell upon him.”[297]

Assurbanipal recounted a high number of such events. In the Rassam Cylinder Assur appeared in a dream to Gyges, the king of Lydia, and commanded him to surrender to Assurbanipal. After a time of submission, however, he hardened his heart and refused to serve the Assyrian king any longer.[298] Assur also “changed the disposition” of Uaite, the king of the Arabs, so he would serve Assurbanipal. However, the Assyrian king still put him in a kennel with jackals and dogs.[299] In Cylinder B, Assurbanipal ascribed two actions in the Elamite land to the gods. When the Assyrian-appointed king stopped following Assyria, the gods caused a rebellion against him, and when the rebel continued to support Assurbanipal’s rebellious brother, the gods caused yet another rebellion against him.[300] The gods sent famine against the enemies of Assurbanipal who had supported his rebellious brother Shamash-shum-ukin, forcing them to eat their children (text was quoted in §4.5.4).[301]

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[296] RINAP 4:15–16, 1, ii.55–57; also *COS* 4.39:175.

[297] RINAP 4:18–19, 1, iii.71–74; also *COS* 4.39:176.

[298] *ARAB* 2:297–98, §§784–85; *COS* 4.41:186; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 218–19.

[299] *COS* 4.41: 192; also *ARAB* 2:314, §819; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 246.

A few events on the battlefield were attributed directly to the gods. In Sargon II's eighth campaign, after the enemy had begun to flee, "Adad, the mighty one, the valiant son of Anu, raised his great battle cry against them, with a cloudburst and hail he finished off the rest."[302] When the besieged troops of Uppume in Shubria set fire to Esarhaddon's siege ramp, Esarhaddon credited Marduk with changing the wind to send the fire against the city.

> While I was marching about victoriously in the midst of that district, in Ululu (VI), the twenty-first day, an evil day, a bad day, the birth(day) of the *asakku*-demon, in the dead of night, they sprinkled with naphtha the ramp that I constructed against Uppume, his royal city, and set fire (to it). By the command of the god Marduk, king of the gods, the north wind, the sweet breeze of the lord of the gods, blew and turned the tongue(s) of roaring flame back on the city Uppume. (The fire) did not se[ize] the ramp […] it burned its wall and turned (it) into ashes.[303]

In a hymn to Ishtar of Nineveh and Ishtar of Arbela (SAA 3.3), Assurbanipal said "Not [with] my [own strength], not with the strength of my bow, but with the power [… and] strength of my goddesses, I made the lands disobedient to me submit to the yoke of Aššur." However, the story told by Assurbanipal of his attack on Elam (recounted above in §8.3.4) casts into doubt some of the veracity of direct divine action. When Assurbanipal heard that the Elamite king Teumman had decided to go to war against him, he approached Ishtar to ask for her help. Ishtar promises to support Assurbanipal in his battles and prohibits him from taking part in the battle. However, instead of merely waiting for the goddess to win the battle by herself, the king entered battle and defeated them at the famous battle of Til Tuba. Since this account was included in his annals, he did not think that this was a failure on Ishtar's part, but apparently he thought it was how such divine claims were to be interpreted.[304]

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[300] *ARAB* 2:335–37, §867; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 77–81; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 229.

[301] *ARAB* 2:338, §870 (Edition B); Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 82–85; Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals*, 244; Cogan, *Raging Torrent*, 187.

[302] Foster, *Before the Muses*, 799; also *COS* 4.42:205.

[303] RINAP 4:82–83, 33, ii.1–7.

8.6.5. Later Empires

The Babylonians did not refer to military activities very often in their annals.[305] However, Nabopolassar, an early Neo-Babylonian king, briefly described the gods working with him in battle. "He [Sazu] caused a good spirit to walk at my side and he let me succeed in everything I undertook. He had Nergal, the strongest among the gods, walk at my side; he killed my enemies, he felled my foes."[306]

Darius incessantly proclaimed that Ahura Mazda "helped" him in battle (for examples, see DB §§18, 31) or that he won battles "by the favour of Auramazda" (DB §20). Even when his general led the troops, Darius recorded that "Auramazda helped me" and give his army victory (DB §25).[307] Xenophon recorded a miracle that enabled Cyrus to march further. "As they proceeded, night came on, and it is said that a light from heaven shone forth upon Cyrus and his army, so that they were all filled with awe at the miracle but with courage to meet the enemy. And as they were proceeding in light marching order with all dispatch, they naturally covered a great distance, and in the morning twilight they drew near to the army of the Hyrcanians" (Xenophon, *Cyr.* 4.2.15 [Miller, LCL]).

8.6.6. West Semitic

In the Ugaritic text Kirta, he besieged the city of Udum for only six days before their king Pabuli gave Kirta tribute to leave him.[308] Although divine intervention is not mentioned, the quick response by the besieged and the seven-day period suggests to some a comparison with YHWH's defeat of

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[304] Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy*, 146–49 (Prism B); also *ARAB* 2:330–33, §§858–63; Piepkorn, *Historical Prism Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal I*, 65–71.

[305] For more on this, see Vanderhooft, *Neo-Babylonian Empire and Babylon in the Latter Prophets*, 9–59.

[306] Al-Rawi, "Nabopolassar's Restoration Work," 5 (i.15–27); also Riva, *Inscriptions of Nabopolassar*, 96.

[307] Kuhrt, *Persian Empire*, 144–45.

[308] Greenstein, "Kirta," 15–17 (*KTU* 1.14, 1.14.iii.2–32); see also 1.14.iv.44–vi.15.

Jericho.[309] According to the Mesha Inscription, Chemosh "drove [גרש] him [king of Israel] away before my face.[310] In the Tel Dan Inscription, the Aramean king rejoiced that "Hadad went before me."[311] Bar-Rakib wrote that the god Hadad stood with his father Panamuwa.[312] Milkyaton, the king of Kition and Idalion, defeated his enemies when Baal gave him the victory. "Et Baʿal ʿOz à donné, à moi et à tout le peuple de Kition, / la [for] ce, et j'ai remporté la victoire sur tous nos ennemis et sur leurs auxiliaires les Paphiens."[313] The Neo-Hittite king Wasusarmas (eighth century) recorded that the gods ran before him, harking back to Hittite terminology of the previous millennium.[314]

The Old Testament commonly portrays YHWH as directly active in battles, most dramatically in the exodus narrative (Exod 14–15) and the battle at Jericho (Josh 6). In Kings, at the besieged city of Dothan, Elisha prayed that YHWH would strike the Arameans with blindness, which he did. He also revealed to Elisha's servant that the city was surrounded by chariots and horses of fire (2 Kgs 6:15–19). Later, at another siege, YHWH caused the Arameans to hear a (nonexistent) advancing army, leading the Arameans to flee the field of battle and leave all their possessions behind (2 Kgs 7:3–8). When Sennacherib attacked Jerusalem, the Old Testament records that the angel of YHWH struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand Assyrians (2 Kgs 19:35). The statement of Ben-Hadad that the Israelites worshiped gods of the hills rather than gods of the plains implies that these gods would be more active in battles in the hills than in the plains (1 Kgs 20:23).

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[309] Daniel E. Fleming, "The Seven-Day Siege of Jericho in Holy War," in *Ki Baruch Hu: Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Judaic Studies in Honor of Baruch A. Levine*, ed. Robert Chazan, William W. Hallo, and Lawrence H. Schiffman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1999), 211–28.

[310] *COS* 2.23:138.

[311] *COS* 2.39:161; see also Aḥituv, *Echoes from the Past*, 468; see also *ANEHST*, 307.

[312] *COS* 2.37:158.

[313] Yon, *Kition dans les Textes*, 201.

[314] Payne, *Iron Age Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions*, 58; also Hawkins, *Inscriptions of the Iron Age*, 1:453. See a similar reference in the Luwian inscriptions of Katuwa of Carchemish in *COS* 4.7:61 and Hamiyata of Ahmar in *COS* 4.10:64.

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